ROYAL ROMANCES OF HISTORY

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Royal Romances of History

By

Lyndon Orr

Three Volumes

Volume Two

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THE EMPRESS CATHARINE AND PRINCE POTEMKIN

FAMOUS AFFINITIES OF HISTORY

THE EMPRESS CATHARINE AND PRINCE POTEMKIN

IT has often been said that the greatest Frenchman who ever lived was in reality an Italian. It might with equal truth be asserted that the greatest Russian woman who ever lived was in reality a German. But the Emperor Napoleon and the Empress Catharine II. resemble each other in something else. Napoleon, though Italian in blood and lineage, made himself so French in sympathy and understanding as to be able to play upon the imagination of all France as a great musician plays upon a splendid instrument, with absolute sureness of touch and an ability to extract from it every one of its varied harmonies. So the Empress Catharine of Russia—perhaps the greatest woman who ever ruled a nation—though born of German parents, became Rus-

sian to the core and made herself the embodiment of Russian feeling and Russian aspiration.

At the middle of the eighteenth century Russia was governed by the Empress Elizabeth, daughter of Peter the Great. In her own time, and for a long while afterward, her real capacity was obscured by her apparent indolence, her fondness for display, and her seeming vacillation; but now a very high place is accorded her in the history of Russian rulers. She softened the brutality that had reigned supreme in Russia. She patronized the arts. Her armies twice defeated Frederick the Great and raided his capital, Berlin. Had Elizabeth lived, she would probably have crushed him.

In her early years this imperial woman had been betrothed to Louis XV. of France, but the match was broken off. Subsequently she entered into a morganatic marriage and bore a son who, of course, could not be her heir. In 1742, therefore, she looked about for a suitable successor, and chose her nephew, Prince Peter of Holstein-Gottorp.

Peter, then a mere youth of seventeen, was delighted with so splendid a future, and came at once to St. Petersburg. The empress next sought for a girl who might marry the young

prince and thus become the future Czarina. She thought first of Frederick the Great's sister; but Frederick shrank from this alliance, though it would have been of much advantage to him. He loved his sister—indeed, she was one of the few persons for whom he ever really cared. So he declined the offer and suggested instead the young Princess Sophia of the tiny duchy of Anhalt-Zerbst.

The reason for Frederick's refusal was his knowledge of the semi-barbarous conditions that prevailed at the Russian court.

The Russian capital, at that time, was a bizarre, half-civilized, half-oriental place, where, among the very highest-born, a thin veneer of French elegance covered every form of brutality and savagery and lust. It is not surprising, therefore, that Frederick the Great was unwilling to have his sister plunged into such a life.

But when the Empress Elizabeth asked the Princess Sophia of Anhalt-Zerbst to marry the heir to the Russian throne the young girl willingly accepted, the more so as her mother practically commanded it. This mother of hers was a grim, harsh German woman who had reared her daughter in the strictest fashion, depriving

her of all pleasure with a truly puritanical severity. In the case of a different sort of girl this training would have crushed her spirit; but the Princess Sophia, though gentle and refined in manner, had a power of endurance which was toughened and strengthened by the discipline she underwent.

And so in 1744, when she was but sixteen years of age, she was taken by her mother to St. Petersburg. There she renounced the Lutheran faith and was received into the Greek Church, changing her name to Catharine. Soon after, with great magnificence, she was married to Prince Peter, and from that moment began a career which was to make her the most powerful woman in the world.

At this time a lady of the Russian court wrote down a description of Catharine's appearance. She was fair-haired, with dark-blue eyes; and her face, though never beautiful, was made piquant and striking by the fact that her brows were very dark in contrast with her golden hair. Her complexion was not clear, yet her look was a very pleasing one. She had a certain diffidence of manner at first; but later she bore herself with such instinctive dignity as to make her seem majestic, though in fact she was beneath

the middle size. At the time of her marriage her figure was slight and graceful; only in after years did she become stout. Altogether, she came to St. Petersburg an attractive, pure-minded German maiden, with a character well disciplined, and possessing reserves of power which had not yet been drawn upon.

Frederick the Great's forebodings, which had led him to withhold his sister's hand, were almost immediately justified in the case of Catharine. Her Russian husband revealed to her a mode of life which must have tried her very soul. This youth was only seventeen—a mere boy in age, and yet a full-grown man in the rank luxuriance of his vices. Moreover, he had eccentricities which sometimes verged upon insanity. Too young to be admitted to the councils of his imperial aunt, he occupied his time in ways that were either ridiculous or vile.

Next to the sleeping-room of his wife he kept a set of kennels, with a number of dogs, which he spent hours in drilling as if they had been soldiers. He had a troop of rats which he also drilled. It was his delight to summon a court martial of his dogs to try the rats for various military offenses, and then to have the culprits executed, leaving their bleeding carcasses upon

the floor. At any hour of the day or night Catharine, hidden in her chamber, could hear the yapping of the curs, the squeak of rats, and the word of command given by her half-idiot husband.

When wearied of this diversion Peter would summon a troop of favorites, both men and women, and with them he would drink deep of beer and vodka, since from his early childhood he had been both a drunkard and a debauchee. The whoops and howls and vile songs of his creatures could be heard by Catharine; and sometimes he would stagger into her rooms, accompanied by his drunken minions. With a sort of psychopathic perversity he would insist on giving Catharine the most minute and repulsive narratives of his amours, until she shrank from him with horror at his depravity and came to loathe the sight of his bloated face, with its little, twinkling, porcine eyes, his upturned nose and distended nostrils, and his loose-hung, lascivious mouth. She was scarcely less repelled when a wholly different mood would seize upon him and he would declare himself her slave, attending her at court functions in the garb of a servant and professing an unbounded devotion for his bride.

Catharine's early training and her womanly nature led her for a long time to submit to the caprices of her husband. In his saner moments she would plead with him and strive to interest him in something better than his dogs and rats and venal mistresses; but Peter was incorrigible. Though he had moments of sense and even of good felling, these never lasted, and after them he would plunge headlong into the most frantic excesses that his half-crazed imagination could devise.

It is not strange that in course of time Catharine's strong good sense showed her that she could do nothing with this creature. She therefore gradually became estranged from him and set herself to the task of doing those things which Peter was incapable of carrying out.

She saw that ever since the first awakening of Russia under Peter the Great none of its rulers had been genuinely Russian, but had tried to force upon the Russian people various forms of western civilization which were alien to the national spirit. Peter the Great had striven to make his people Dutch. Elizabeth had tried to make them French. Catharine, with a sure instinct, resolved that they should remain Russian, borrowing what they needed from other

peoples, but stirred always by the Slavic spirit and swayed by a patriotism that was their own. To this end she set herself to become Russian. She acquired the Russian language patiently and accurately. She adopted the Russian costume, appearing, except on state occasions, in a simple gown of green, covering her fair hair, however, with a cap powdered with diamonds. Furthermore, she made friends of such native Russians as were gifted with talent, winning their favor, and, through them, the favor of the common people.

It would have been strange, however, had Catharine, the woman, escaped the tainting influences that surrounded her on every side. The infidelities of Peter gradually made her feel that she owed him nothing as his wife. Among the nobles there were men whose force of character and of mind attracted her inevitably. Chastity was a thing of which the average Russian had no conception; and therefore it is not strange that Catharine, with her intense and sensitive nature, should have turned to some of these for the love which she had sought in vain from the half imbecile to whom she had been married.

Much has been written of this side of her ear-

lier and later life; yet, though it is impossible to deny that she had favorites, one should judge very gently the conduct of a girl so young and thrust into a life whence all the virtues seemed to be excluded. She bore several children before her thirtieth year, and it is very certain that a grave doubt exists as to their paternity. Among the nobles of the court were two whose courage and virility specially attracted her. The one with whom her name has been most often coupled was Gregory Orloff. He and his brother, Alexis Orloff, were Russians of the older type—powerful in frame, suave in manner except when roused, yet with a tigerish ferocity slumbering underneath. Their power fascinated Catharine, and it was currently declared that Gregory Orloff was her lover.

When she was in her thirty-second year her husband was proclaimed Czar, after the death of the Empress Elizabeth. At first in some ways his elevation seemed to sober him; but this period of sanity, like those which had come to him before, lasted only a few weeks. Historians have given him much credit for two great reforms that are connected with his name; and yet the manner in which they were actually brought about is rather ludicrous. He had shut

himself up with his favorite revelers, and had remained for several days drinking and carousing until he scarcely knew enough to speak. At this moment a young officer named Gudovitch, who was really loyal to the newly created Czar, burst into the banquet-hall, booted and spurred and his eyes aflame with indignation. Standing before Peter, his voice rang out with the tone of a battle trumpet, so that the sounds of revelry were hushed.

"Peter Feodorovitch," he cried, "do you prefer these swine to those who really wish to serve you? Is it in this way that you imitate the glories of your ancestor, that illustrious Peter whom you have sworn to take as your model? It will not be long before your people's love will be changed to hatred. Rise up, my Czar! Shake off this lethargy and sloth. Prove that you are worthy of the faith which I and others have given you so loyally!"

With these words Gudovitch thrust into Peter's trembling hand two proclamations, one abolishing the secret bureau of police, which had become an instrument of tyrannous oppression, and the other restoring to the nobility many rights of which they had been deprived.

The earnestness and intensity of Gudovitch

temporarily cleared the brain of the drunken Czar. He seized the papers, and, without reading them, hastened at once to his great council, where he declared that they expressed his wishes. Great was the rejoicing in St. Petersburg, and great was the praise bestowed on Peter; yet, in fact, he had acted only as any drunkard might act under the compulsion of a stronger will than his.

As before, his brief period of good sense was succeeded by another of the wildest folly. It was not merely that he reversed the wise policy of his aunt, but that he reverted to his early fondness for everything that was German. His bodyguard was made up of German troops—thus exciting the jealousy of the Russian soldiers. He introduced German fashions. He boasted that his father had been an officer in the Prussian army. His crazy admiration for Frederick the Great reached the utmost verge of sycophancy.

As to Catharine, he turned on her with something like ferocity. He declared in public that his eldest son, the Czarevitch Paul, was really fathered by Catharine's lovers. At a state banquet he turned to Catharine and hurled at her a name which no woman could possibly forgive

—and least of all a woman such as Catharine, with her high spirit and imperial pride. He thrust his mistresses upon her; and at last he ordered her, with her own hand, to decorate the Countess Vorontzoff, who was known to be his *maîtresse en titre.*

It was not these gross insults, however, so much as a concern for her personal safety that led Catharine to take measures for her own defense. She was accustomed to Peter's ordinary eccentricities. On the ground of his unfaithfulness to her she now had hardly any right to make complaint. But she might reasonably fear lest he was becoming mad. If he questioned the paternity of their eldest son he might take measures to imprison Catharine or even to destroy her. Therefore she conferred with the Orloffs and other gentlemen, and their conference rapidly developed into a conspiracy.

The soldiery, as a whole, was loyal to the empress. It hated Peter's Holstein guards. What she planned was probably the deposition of Peter. She would have liked to place him under guard in some distant palace. But while the matter was still under discussion she was awakened early one morning by Alexis Orloff. He grasped her arm with scant ceremony.

"We must act at once," said he. "We have been betrayed!"

Catharine was not a woman to waste time. She went immediately to the barracks in St. Petersburg, mounted upon a charger, and, calling out the Russian guards, appealed to them for their support. To a man they clashed their weapons and roared forth a thunderous cheer. Immediately afterward the priests anointed her as regent in the name of her son; but as she left the church she was saluted by the people, as well as by the soldiers, as empress in her own right.

It was a bold stroke, and it succeeded down to the last detail. The wretched Peter, who was drilling his German guards at a distance from the capital, heard of the revolt, found that his sailors at Kronstadt would not acknowledge him, and then finally submitted. He was taken to Ropsha and confined within a single room. To him came the Orloffs, quite of their own accord. Gregory Orloff endeavored to force a corrosive poison into Peter's mouth. Peter, who was powerful of build and now quite desperate, hurled himself upon his enemies. Alexis Orloff seized him by the throat with a tremendous clutch and strangled him till the blood gushed

from his ears. In a few moments the unfortunate man was dead.

Catharine was shocked by the intelligence, but she had no choice save to accept the result of excessive zeal. She issued a note to the foreign ambassadors informing them that Peter had died of a violent colic. When his body was laid out for burial the extravasated blood is said to have oozed out even through his hands, staining the gloves that had been placed upon them. No one believed the story of the colic; and some six years later Alexis Orloff told the truth with the utmost composure. The whole incident was characteristically Russian.

It is not within the limits of our space to describe the reign of Catharine the Great—the exploits of her armies, the acuteness of her statecraft, the vast additions which she made to the Russian Empire, and the impulse which she gave to science and art and literature. Yet these things ought to be remembered first of all when one thinks of the woman whom Voltaire once styled "the Semiramis of the North." Because she was so powerful, because no one could gainsay her, she led in private a life which has been almost more exploited than her great imperial achievements. And yet, though

she had lovers whose names have been carefully recorded, even she fulfilled the law of womanhood—which is to love deeply and intensely only once.

One should not place all her lovers in the same category. As a girl, and when repelled by the imbecility of Peter, she gave herself to Gregory Orloff. She admired his strength, his daring, and his unscrupulousness. But to a woman of her fine intelligence he came to seem almost more brute than man. She could not turn to him for any of those delicate attentions which a woman loves so much, nor for that larger sympathy which wins the heart as well as captivates the senses. A writer of the time has said that Orloff would hasten with equal readiness from the arms of Catharine to the embraces of any flat-nosed Finn or filthy Calmuck or to the lowest creature whom he might encounter in the streets.

It happened that at the time of Catharine's appeal to the imperial guards there came to her notice another man who—as he proved in a trifling and yet most significant manner—had those traits which Orloff lacked. Catharine had mounted, man-fashion, a cavalry horse, and, with a helmet on her head, had reined up her

steed before the barracks. At that moment one of the minor nobles, who was also favorable to her, observed that her helmet had no plume. In a moment his horse was at her side. Bowing low over his saddle, he took his own plume from his helmet and fastened it to hers. This man was Prince Gregory Potemkin, and this slight act gives a clue to the influence which he afterward exercised over his imperial mistress.

When Catharine grew weary of the Orloffs, and when she had enriched them with lands and treasures, she turned to Potemkin; and from then until the day of his death he was more to her than any other man had ever been. With others she might flirt and might go even further than flirtation; but she allowed no other favorite to share her confidence, to give advice, or to direct her policies.

To other men she made munificent gifts, either because they pleased her for the moment or because they served her on one occasion or another; but to Potemkin she opened wide the whole treasury of her vast realm. There was no limit to what she would do for him. When he first knew her he was a man of very moderate fortune. Within two years after their intimate acquaintance had begun she had given him nine

million rubles, while afterward he accepted almost limitless estates in Poland and in every province of Greater Russia.

He was a man of sumptuous tastes, and yet he cared but little for mere wealth. What he had he used to please or gratify or surprise the woman whom he loved. He built himself a great palace in St. Petersburg, usually known as the Taurian Palace, and there he gave the most sumptuous entertainments, reversing the story of Antony and Cleopatra.

In a superb library there stood one case containing volumes bound with unusual richness. When the empress, attracted by the bindings, drew forth a book she found to her surprise that its pages were English bank-notes. The pages of another proved to be Dutch bank-notes, and, of another, notes on the Bank of Venice. Of the remaining volumes some were of solid gold, while others had pages of fine leather in which were set emeralds and rubies and diamonds and other gems. The story reads like a bit of fiction from the Arabian Nights. Yet, after all, this was only a small affair compared with other undertakings with which Potemkin sought to please her.

Thus, after Taurida and the Crimea had been

added to the empire by Potemkin's agency, Catharine set out with him to view her new possessions. A great fleet of magnificently decorated galleys bore her down the river Dnieper. The country through which she passed had been a year before an unoccupied waste. Now, by Potemkin's extraordinary efforts, the empress found it dotted thick with towns and cities which had been erected for the occasion, filled with a busy population which swarmed along the riverside to greet the sovereign with applause. It was only a chain of fantom towns and cities, made of painted wood and canvas; but while Catharine was there they were very real, seeming to have solid buildings, magnificent arches, bustling industries, and beautiful stretches of fertile country. No human being ever wrought on so great a scale so marvelous a miracle of stage-management.

Potemkin was, in fact, the one man who could appeal with unfailing success to so versatile and powerful a spirit as Catharine's. He was handsome of person, graceful of manner, and with an intellect which matched her own. He never tried to force her inclination, and, on the other hand, he never strove to thwart it. To him, as to no other man, she could turn at any moment

and feel that, no matter what her mood, he could understand her fully. And this, according to Balzac, is the thing that woman yearns for most —a kindred spirit that can understand without the slightest need of explanation.

Thus it was that Gregory Potemkin held a place in the soul of this great woman such as no one else attained. He might be absent, heading armies or ruling provinces, and on his return he would be greeted with even greater fondness than before. And it was this rather than his victories over Turk and other oriental enemies that made Catharine trust him absolutely.

When he died, he died as the supreme master of her foreign policy and at a time when her word was powerful throughout all Europe. Death came upon him after he had fought against it with singular tenacity of purpose. Catharine had given him a magnificent triumph, and he had entertained her in his Taurian Palace with a splendor such as even Russia had never known before. Then he fell ill, though with high spirit he would not yield to illness. He ate rich meats and drank rich wines and bore himself as gallantly as ever. Yet all at once death came upon him while he was travel-

ing in the south of Russia. His carriage was stopped, a rug was spread beneath a tree by the roadside, and there he died, in the country which he had added to the realms of Russia.

The great empress who loved him mourned him deeply during the five years of life that still remained to her. The names of other men for whom she had imagined that she cared were nothing to her. But this one man lived in her heart in death as he had done in life.

Many have written of Catharine as a great ruler, a wise diplomat, a creature of heroic mold. Others have depicted her as a royal wanton and have gathered together a mass of vicious tales, the gossip of the palace kitchens, of the clubs, and of the barrack-rooms. But perhaps one finds the chief interest of her story to lie in this —that besides being empress and diplomat and a lover of pleasure she was, beyond all else, at heart a woman.

MARIE ANTOINETTE AND COUNT FERSEN

MARIE ANTOINETTE AND COUNT FERSEN

THE English-speaking world long ago accepted a conventional view of Marie Antoinette. The eloquence of Edmund Burke in one brilliant passage has fixed, probably for all time, an enduring picture of this unhappy queen.

When we speak or think of her we speak and think first of all of a dazzling and beautiful woman surrounded by the chivalry of France and gleaming like a star in the most splendid court of Europe. And then there comes to us the reverse of the picture. We see her despised, insulted, and made the butt of brutal men and still more fiendish women; until at last the hideous tumbrel conveys her to the guillotine, where her head is severed from her body and her corpse is cast down into a bloody pool.

In these two pictures our emotions are played upon in turn—admiration, reverence, devotion, and then pity, indignation, and the shudderings of horror.

Probably in our own country and in England this will remain the historic Marie Antoinette. Whatever the impartial historian may write, he can never induce the people at large to understand that this queen was far from queenly, that the popular idea of her is almost wholly false, and that both in her domestic life and as the greatest lady in France she did much to bring on the terrors of that revolution which swept her to the guillotine.

In the first place, it is mere fiction that represents Maria Antoinette as having been physically beautiful. The painters and engravers have so idealized her face as in most cases to have produced a purely imaginary portrait.

She was born in Vienna, in 1755, the daughter of the Emperor Francis and of that warrior-queen, Maria Theresa. She was a very German-looking child. Lady Jackson describes her as having a long, thin face, small, pig-like eyes, a pinched-up mouth, with the heavy Hapsburg lip, and with a somewhat misshapen form, so that for years she had to be bandaged tightly to give her a more natural figure.

At fourteen, when she was betrothed to the heir to the French throne, she was a dumpy, mean-looking little creature, with no distinc-

tion whatever, and with only her bright golden hair to make amends for her many blemishes. At fifteen she was married and joined the Dauphin in French territory.

We must recall for a moment the conditions which prevailed in France. King Louis XV. was nearing his end. He was a man of the most shameless life; yet he had concealed or gilded his infamies by an external dignity and magnificence which were very pleasing to his people. The French liked to think that their king was the most splendid monarch and the greatest gentleman in Europe. The courtiers about him might be vile beneath the surface, yet they were compelled to deport themselves with the form and the etiquette that had become traditional in France. They might be panders, or stock-jobbers, or sellers of political offices; yet they must none the less have wit and grace and outward nobility of manner.

There was also a tradition regarding the French queen. However loose in character the other women of the court might be, she alone, like Cæsar's wife, must remain above suspicion. She must be purer than the pure. No breath of scandal must reach her or be directed against her.

In this way the French court, even under so dissolute a monarch as Louis XV., maintained its hold upon the loyalty of the people. Crowds came every morning to view the king in his bed before he arose; the same crowds watched him as he was dressed by the gentlemen of the bedchamber, and as he breakfasted and went through all the functions which are usually private. The King of France must be a great actor. He must appear to his people as in reality a king—stately, dignified, and beyond all other human beings in his remarkable presence.

When the Dauphin and Marie Antoinette came to the French court King Louis XV. kept up in the case the same semblance of austerity. He forbade these children to have their sleeping-apartments together. He tried to teach them that if they were to govern as well as to reign they must conform to the rigid etiquette of Paris and Versailles.

It proved a difficult task, however. The little German princess had no natural dignity, though she came from a court where the very strictest imperial discipline prevailed. Marie Antoinette found that she could have her own way in many things, and she chose to enjoy life

without regard to ceremony. Her escapades at first would have been thought mild enough had she not been a "daughter of France"; but they served to shock the old French king, and likewise, perhaps even more, her own imperial mother, Maria Theresa.

When a report of the young girl's conduct was brought to her the empress was at first mute with indignation. Then she cried out:

"Can this girl be a child of mine? She surely must be a changeling!"

The Austrian ambassador to France was instructed to warn the Dauphiness to be more discreet.

"Tell her," said Maria Theresa, "that she will lose her throne, and even her life, unless she shows more prudence."

But advice and remonstrance were of no avail. Perhaps they might have been had her husband possessed a stronger character; but the young Louis was little more fitted to be a king than was his wife to be a queen. Dull of perception and indifferent to affairs of state, he had only two interests that absorbed him. One was the love of hunting, and the other was his desire to shut himself up in a sort of blacksmith shop, where he could hammer away at the anvil,

blow the bellows, and manufacture small trifles of mechanical inventions. From this smudgy den he would emerge, sooty and greasy, an object of distaste to his frivolous princess, with her foamy laces and perfumes and pervasive daintiness.

It was hinted in many quarters, and it has been many times repeated, that Louis was lacking in virility. Certainly he had no interest in the society of women and was wholly continent. But this charge of physical incapacity seems to have had no real foundation. It had been made against some of his predecessors. It was afterward hurled at Napoleon the Great, and also Napoleon the Little. In France, unless a royal personage was openly licentious, he was almost sure to be jeered at by the people as a weakling.

And so poor Louis XVI., as he came to be, was treated with a mixture of pity and contempt because he loved to hammer and mend locks in his smithy or shoot game when he might have been caressing ladies who would have been proud to have him choose them out.

On the other hand, because of this opinion regarding Louis, people were the more suspicious of Marie Antoinette. Some of them, in

coarse language, criticized her assumed infidelities; others, with a polite sneer, affected to defend her. But the result of it all was dangerous to both, especially as France was already verging toward the deluge which Louis XV. had cynically predicted would follow after him.

In fact, the end came sooner than any one had guessed. Louis XV., who had become hopelessly and helplessly infatuated with the low-born Jeanne du Barry, was stricken down with smallpox of the most virulent type. For many days he lay in his gorgeous bed. Courtiers crowded his sick-room and the adjacent hall, longing for the moment when the breath would leave his body. He had lived an evil life, and he was to die a loathsome death; yet he had borne himself before men as a stately monarch. Though his people had suffered in a thousand ways from his misgovernment, he was still Louis the Well Beloved, and they blamed his ministers of state for all the shocking wrongs that France had felt.

The abler men, and some of the leaders of the people, however, looked forward to the accession of Louis XVI. He at least was frugal in his habits and almost plebeian in his tastes, and

seemed to be one who would reduce the enormous taxes that had been levied upon France.

The moment came when the Well Beloved died. His death-room was fetid with disease, and even the long corridors of the palace reeked with infection, while the motley mob of men and women, clad in silks and satins and glittering with jewels, hurried from the spot to pay their homage to the new Louis, who was spoken of as "the Desired." The body of the late monarch was hastily thrown into a mass of quicklime, and was driven away in a humble wagon, without guards and with no salute, save from a single veteran, who remembered the glories of Fontenoy and discharged his musket as the royal corpse was carried through the palace gates.

This was a critical moment in the history of France; but we have to consider it only as a critical moment in the history of Marie Antoinette. She was now queen. She had it in her power to restore to the French court its old-time grandeur, and, so far as the queen was concerned, its purity. Above all, being a foreigner, she should have kept herself free from reproach and above every shadow of suspicion.

But here again the indifference of the king

undoubtedly played a strange part in her life. Had he borne himself as her lord and master she might have respected him. Had he shown her the affection of a husband she might have loved him. But he was neither imposing, nor, on the other hand, was he alluring. She wrote very frankly about him in a letter to the Count Orsini:

> My tastes are not the same as those of the king, who cares only for hunting and blacksmith work. You will admit that I should not show to advantage in a forge. I could not appear there as Vulcan, and the part of Venus might displease him even more than my tastes.

Thus on the one side is a woman in the first bloom of youth, ardent, eager—and neglected. On the other side is her husband, whose sluggishness may be judged by quoting from a diary which he kept during the month in which he was married. Here is a part of it:

Sunday, 13—Left Versailles. Supper and slept at Compignee, at the house of M. de Saint-Florentin.
Monday, 14—Interview with Mme. la Dauphine.
Tuesday, 15—Supped at La Muette. Slept at Versailles.
Wednesday, 16—My marriage. Apartment in the gallery. Royal banquet in the Salle d'Opéra.
Thursday, 17—Opéra of "Perseus."
Friday, 18—Stag-hunt. Met at La Belle Image. Took one.

Saturday, 19—Dress-ball in the Salle d'Opéra. Fireworks.

Thursday, 31—I had an indigestion.

What might have been expected from a young girl placed as this queen was placed? She was indeed an earlier Eugénie. The first was of royal blood, the second was almost a plebeian; but each was headstrong, pleasure-loving, and with no real domestic ties. As Mr. Kipling expresses it—

> The colonel's lady and Judy O'Grady
> Are sisters under their skins;

and so the Austrian woman of 1776 and the Spanish woman of 1856 found amusement in very similar ways. They plunged into a sea of strange frivolity, such as one finds to-day at the centers of high fashion. Marie Antoinette bedecked herself with eccentric garments. On her head she wore a hat styled a "what-is-it," towering many feet in height and flaunting parti-colored plumes. Worse than all this, she refused to wear corsets, and at some great functions she would appear in what looked exactly like a bedroom gown.

She would even neglect the ordinary niceties

of life. Her hands were not well cared for. It was very difficult for the ladies in attendance to persuade her to brush her teeth with regularity. Again, she would persist in wearing her frilled and lace-trimmed petticoats long after their dainty edges had been smirched and blackened.

Yet these things might have been counteracted had she gone no further. Unfortunately, she did go further. She loved to dress at night like a shop-girl and venture out into the world of Paris, where she was frequently followed and recognized. Think of it—the Queen of France, elbowed in dense crowds and seeking to attract the attention of common soldiers!

Of course, almost every one put the worst construction upon this, and after a time upon everything she did. When she took a fancy for constructing labyrinths and secret passages in the palace, all Paris vowed that she was planning means by which her various lovers might enter without observation. The hidden printing-presses of Paris swarmed with gross lampoons about this reckless girl; and, although there was little truth in what they said, there was enough to cloud her reputation. When she fell ill with the measles she was attended in her sick-chamber by four gentlemen of the court.

The king was forbidden to enter lest he might catch the childish disorder.

The apathy of the king, indeed, drove her into many a folly. After four years of marriage, as Mrs. Mayne records, he had only reached the point of giving her a chilly kiss. The fact that she had no children became a serious matter. Her brother, the Emperor Joseph of Austria, when he visited Paris, ventured to speak to the king upon the subject. Even the Austrian ambassador had thrown out hints that the house of Bourbon needed direct heirs. Louis grunted and said little, but he must have known how good was the advice.

It was at about this time when there came to the French court a young Swede named Axel de Fersen, who bore the title of count, but who was received less for his rank than for his winning manner, his knightly bearing, and his handsome, sympathetic face. Romantic in spirit, he threw himself at once into a silent inner worship of Marie Antoinette, who had for him a singular attraction. Wherever he could meet her they met. To her growing cynicism this breath of pure yet ardent affection was very grateful. It came as something fresh and sweet into the feverish life she led.

Other men had had the audacity to woo her —among them Duc de Lauzun, whose complicity in the famous affair of the diamond necklace afterward cast her, though innocent, into ruin; the Duc de Biron; and the Baron de Besenval, who had obtained much influence over her, which he used for the most evil purposes. Besenval tainted her mind by persuading her to read indecent books, in the hope that at last she would become his prey.

But none of these men ever meant to Marie Antoinette what Fersen meant. Though less than twenty years of age, he maintained the reserve of a great gentleman, and never forced himself upon her notice. Yet their first acquaintance had occurred in such a way as to give to it a touch of intimacy. He had gone to a masked ball, and there had chosen for his partner a lady whose face was quite concealed. Something drew the two together. The gaiety of the woman and the chivalry of the man blended most harmoniously. It was only afterward that he discovered that his chance partner was the first lady in France. She kept his memory in her mind; for some time later, when he was at a royal drawing-room and she heard his voice, she exclaimed:

"Ah, an old acquaintance!"

From this time Fersen was among those who were most intimately favored by the queen. He had the privilege of attending her private receptions at the palace of the Trianon, and was a conspicuous figure at the feasts given in the queen's honor by the Princess de Lamballe, a beautiful girl whose head was destined afterward to be severed from her body and borne upon a bloody pike through the streets of Paris. But as yet the deluge had not arrived and the great and noble still danced upon the brink of a volcano.

Fersen grew more and more infatuated, nor could he quite conceal his feelings. The queen, in her turn, was neither frightened nor indignant. His passion, so profound and yet so respectful, deeply moved her. Then came a time when the truth was made clear to both of them. Fersen was near her while she was singing to the harpsichord, and "she was betrayed by her own music into an avowal which song made easy." She forgot that she was Queen of France. She only felt that her womanhood had been starved and slighted, and that here was a noble-minded lover of whom she could be proud.

Some time after this announcement was of-

ficially made of the approaching accouchement of the queen. It was impossible that malicious tongues should be silent. The king's brother, the Comte de Provence, who hated the queen, just as the Bonapartes afterward hated Josephine, did his best to besmirch her reputation. He had, indeed, the extraordinary insolence to do so at a time when one would suppose that the vilest of men would remain silent. The child proved to be a princess, and she afterward received the title of Duchesse d'Angoulême. The King of Spain asked to be her godfather at the christening, which was to be held in the cathedral of Notre Dame. The Spanish king was not present in person, but asked the Comte de Provence to act as his proxy.

On the appointed day the royal party proceeded to the cathedral, and the Comte de Provence presented the little child at the baptismal font. The grand almoner, who presided, asked:

"What name shall be given to this child?"

The Comte de Provence answered in a sneering tone:

"Oh, we don't begin with that. The first thing to find out is who the father and the mother are!"

These words, spoken at such a place and such a time, and with a strongly sardonic ring, set all Paris gossiping. It was a thinly veiled innuendo that the father of the child was not the King of France. Those about the court immediately began to look at Fersen with significant smiles. The queen would gladly have kept him near her; but Fersen cared even more for her good name than for his love of her. It would have been so easy to remain in the full enjoyment of his conquest; but he was too chivalrous for that, or, rather, he knew that the various ambassadors in Paris had told their respective governments of the rising scandal. In fact, the following secret despatch was sent to the King of Sweden by his envoy:

> I must confide to your majesty that the young Count Fersen has been so well received by the queen that various persons have taken it amiss. I own that I am sure that she has a liking for him. I have seen proofs of it too certain to be doubted. During the last few days the queen has not taken her eyes off him, and as she gazed they were full of tears. I beg your majesty to keep their secret to yourself.

The queen wept because Fersen had resolved to leave her lest she should be exposed to further gossip. If he left her without any appar-

ent reason, the gossip would only be the more intense. Therefore he decided to join the French troops who were going to America to fight under Lafayette. A brilliant but dissolute duchess taunted him when the news became known.

"How is this?" said she. "Do you forsake your conquest?"

But, "lying like a gentleman," Fersen answered, quietly:

"Had I made a conquest I should not forsake it. I go away free, and, unfortunately, without leaving any regret."

Nothing could have been more chivalrous than the pains which Fersen took to shield the reputation of the queen. He even allowed it to be supposed that he was planning a marriage with a rich young Swedish woman who had been naturalized in England. As a matter of fact, he departed for America, and not very long afterward the young woman in question married an Englishman.

Fersen served in America for a time, returning, however, at the end of three years. He was one of the original Cincinnati, being admitted to the order by Washington himself. When he returned to France he was received

with high honors and was made colonel of the royal Swedish regiment.

The dangers threatening Louis and his court, which were now gigantic and appalling, forbade him to forsake the queen. By her side he did what he could to check the revolution; and, failing this, he helped her to maintain an imperial dignity of manner which she might otherwise have lacked. He faced the bellowing mob which surrounded the Tuileries. Lafayette tried to make the National Guard obey his orders, but he was jeered at for his pains. Violent epithets were hurled at the king. The least insulting name which they could give him was "a fat pig." As for the queen, the most filthy phrases were showered upon her by the men, and even more so by the women, who swarmed out of the slums and sought her life.

At last, in 1791, it was decided that the king and the queen and their children, of whom they now had three, should endeavor to escape from Paris. Fersen planned their flight, but it proved to be a failure. Every one remembers how they were discovered and halted at Varennes. The royal party was escorted back to Paris by the mob, which chanted with insolent additions:

"We've brought back the baker, the baker's wife, and the baker's boy! Now we shall have bread!"

Against the savage fury which soon animated the French a foreigner like Fersen could do very little; but he seems to have endeavored, night and day, to serve the woman whom he loved. His efforts have been described by Grandat; but they were of no avail. The king and queen were practically made prisoners. Their eldest son died. They went through horrors that were stimulated by the wretch Hébert, at the head of his so-called Madmen (*Enragés*). The king was executed in January, 1792. The queen dragged out a brief existence in a prison where she was for ever under the eyes of human brutes, who guarded her and watched her and jeered at her at times when even men would be sensitive. Then, at last, she mounted the scaffold, and her head, with its shining hair, fell into the bloody basket.

Marie Antoinette shows many contradictions in her character. As a young girl she was petulant and silly and almost unseemly in her actions. As a queen, with waning power, she took on a dignity which recalled the dignity of her imperial mother. At first a flirt, she fell

deeply in love when she met a man who was worthy of that love. She lived for most part like a mere *cocotte*. She died every inch a queen.

One finds a curious resemblance between the fate of Marie Antoinette and that of her gallant lover, who outlived her for nearly twenty years. She died amid the shrieks and execrations of a maddened populace in Paris; he was practically torn in pieces by a mob in the streets of Stockholm. The day of his death was the anniversary of the flight to Varennes. To the last moment of his existence he remained faithful to the memory of the royal woman who had given herself so utterly to him.

THE STORY OF AARON BURR

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THERE will come a time when the name of Aaron Burr will be cleared from the prejudice which now surrounds it, when he will stand in the public estimation side by side with Alexander Hamilton, whom he shot in a duel in 1804, but whom in many respects he curiously resembled. When the white light of history shall have searched them both they will appear as two remarkable men, each having his own undoubted faults and at the same time his equally undoubted virtues.

Burr and Hamilton were born within a year of each other—Burr being a grandson of Jonathan Edwards, and Alexander Hamilton being the illegitimate son of a Scottish merchant in the West Indies. Each of them was short in stature, keen of intellect, of great physical endurance, courage, and impressive personality. Each as a young man served on the staff of Washington during the Revolutionary War, and each of them quarreled with him, though in a different way.

On one occasion Burr was quite unjustly suspected by Washington of looking over the latter's shoulder while he was writing. Washington leaped to his feet with the exclamation:

"How dare you, Colonel Burr?"

Burr's eyes flashed fire at the question, and he retorted, haughtily:

"Colonel Burr *dare* do anything."

This, however, was the end of their altercation. The cause of Hamilton's difference with his chief is not known, but it was a much more serious quarrel; so that the young officer left his staff position in a fury and took no part in the war until the end, when he was present at the battle of Yorktown.

Burr, on the other hand, helped Montgomery to storm the heights of Quebec, and nearly reached the upper citadel when his commander was shot dead and the Americans retreated. In all this confusion Burr showed himself a man of mettle. The slain Montgomery was six feet high, but Burr carried his body away with wonderful strength amid a shower of musket-balls and grape-shot.

Hamilton had no belief in the American Constitution, which he called "a shattered, feeble thing." He could never obtain an elective of-

fice, and he would have preferred to see the United States transformed into a kingdom. Washington's magnanimity and clear-sightedness made Hamilton Secretary of the Treasury. Burr, on the other hand, continued his military service until the war was ended, routing the enemy at Hackensack, enduring the horrors of Valley Forge, commanding a brigade at the battle of Monmouth, and heading the defense of the city of New Haven. He was also attorney-general of New York, was elected to the United States Senate, was tied with Jefferson for the Presidency, and then became Vice-President.

Both Hamilton and Burr were effective speakers; but, while Hamilton was wordy and diffuse, Burr spoke always to the point, with clear and cogent reasoning. Both were lavish spenders of money, and both were engaged in duels before the fatal one in which Hamilton fell. Both believed in dueling as the only way of settling an affair of honor. Neither of them was averse to love affairs, though it may be said that Hamilton sought women, while Burr was rather sought by women. When Secretary of the Treasury, Hamilton was obliged to confess an adulterous amour in order to save himself from the charge of corrupt practices in

public office. So long as Burr's wife lived he was a devoted, faithful husband to her. Hamilton was obliged to confess his illicit acts while his wife, formerly Miss Elizabeth Schuyler, was living. She spent her later years in buying and destroying the compromising documents which her husband had published for his countrymen to read.

The most extraordinary thing about Aaron Burr was the magnetic quality that was felt by every one who approached him. The roots of this penetrated down into a deep vitality. He was always young, always alert, polished in manner, courageous with that sort of courage which does not even recognize the presence of danger, charming in conversation, and able to adapt it to men or women of any age whatever. His hair was still dark in his eightieth year. His step was still elastic, his motions were still as spontaneous and energetic, as those of a youth.

So it was that every one who knew him experienced his fascination. The rough troops whom he led through the Canadian swamps felt the iron hand of his discipline; yet they were devoted to him, since he shared all their toils, faced all their dangers, and ate with them the

scraps of hide which they gnawed to keep the breath of life in their shrunken bodies.

Burr's discipline was indeed very strict, so that at first raw recruits rebelled against it. On one occasion the men of an untrained company resented it so bitterly that they decided to shoot Colonel Burr as he paraded them for roll-call that evening. Burr somehow got word of it and contrived to have all the cartridges drawn from their muskets. When the time for the roll-call came one of the malcontents leaped from the front line and leveled his weapon at Burr.

"Now is the time, boys!" he shouted.

Like lightning Burr's sword flashed from its scabbard with such a vigorous stroke as to cut the man's arm completely off and partly to cleave the musket.

"Take your place in the ranks," said Burr.

The mutineer obeyed, dripping with blood. A month later every man in that company was devoted to his commander. They had learned that discipline was the surest source of safety.

But with this high spirit and readiness to fight Burr had a most pleasing way of meeting every one who came to him. When he was arrested in the Western forests, charged with

high treason, the sound of his voice won from jury after jury verdicts of acquittal. Often the sheriffs would not arrest him. One grand jury not merely exonerated him from all public misdemeanors, but brought in a strong presentment against the officers of the government for molesting him.

It was the same everywhere. Burr made friends and devoted allies among all sorts of men. During his stay in France, England, Germany, and Sweden he interested such men as Charles Lamb, Jeremy Bentham, Sir Walter Scott, Goethe, and Heeren. They found his mind able to meet with theirs on equal terms. Burr, indeed, had graduated as a youth with honors from Princeton, and had continued his studies there after graduation, which was then a most unusual thing to do. But, of course, he learned most from his contact with men and women of the world.

Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe, in *The Minister's Wooing,* has given what is probably an exact likeness of Aaron Burr, with his brilliant gifts and some of his defects. It is strong testimony to the character of Burr that Mrs. Stowe set out to paint him as a villain; but before she had written long she felt his fascination and

made her readers, in their own despite, admirers of this remarkable man. There are many parallels, indeed, between him and Napoleon—in the quickness of his intellect, the ready use of his resources, and his power over men, while he was more than Napoleon in his delightful gift of conversation and the easy play of his cultured mind.

Those who are full of charm are willing also to be charmed. All his life Burr was abstemious in food and drink. His tastes were most refined. It is difficult to believe that such a man could have been an unmitigated profligate.

In his twentieth year there seems to have begun the first of the romances that run through the story of his long career. Perhaps one ought not to call it the first romance, for at eighteen, while he was studying law at Litchfield, a girl, whose name has been suppressed, made an open avowal of love for him. Almost at the same time an heiress with a large fortune would have married him had he been willing to accept her hand. But at this period he was only a boy and did not take such things seriously.

Two years later, after Burr had seen hard service at Quebec and on Manhattan Island, his name was associated with that of a very beau-

tiful girl named Margaret Moncrieffe. She was the daughter of a British major, but in some way she had been captured while within the American lines. Her captivity was regarded as little more than a joke; but while she was thus a prisoner she saw a great deal of Burr. For several months they were comrades, after which General Putnam sent her with his compliments to her father.

Margaret Moncrieffe had a most emotional nature. There can be no doubt that she deeply loved the handsome young American officer, whom she never saw again. It is doubtful how far their intimacy was carried. Later she married a Mr. Coghlan. After reaching middle life she wrote of Burr in a way which shows that neither years nor the obligations of marriage could make her forget that young soldier, whom she speaks of as "the conqueror of her soul." In the rather florid style of those days the once youthful Margaret Moncrieffe expresses herself as follows:

> Oh, may these pages one day meet the eye of him who subdued my virgin heart, whom the immutable, unerring laws of nature had pointed out for my husband, but whose sacred decree the barbarous customs of society fatally violated!

Commenting on this paragraph, Mr. H. C. Merwin justly remarks that, whatever may have been Burr's conduct toward Margaret Moncrieffe, the lady herself, who was the person chiefly concerned, had no complaint to make of it. It certainly was no very serious affair, since in the following year Burr met a lady who, while she lived, was the only woman for whom he ever really cared.

This was Theodosia Prevost, the wife of a major in the British army. Burr met her first in 1777, while she was living with her sister in Westchester County. Burr's command was fifteen miles across the river, but distance and danger made no difference to him. He used to mount a swift horse, inspect his sentinels and outposts, and then gallop to the Hudson, where a barge rowed by six soldiers awaited him. The barge was well supplied with buffalo-skins, upon which the horse was thrown with his legs bound, and then half an hour's rowing brought them to the other side. There Burr resumed his horse, galloped to the house of Mrs. Prevost, and, after spending a few hours with her, returned in the same way.

Mrs. Prevost was by no means beautiful, but she had an attractiveness of her own. She was

well educated and possessed charming manners, with a disposition both gentle and affectionate. Her husband died soon after the beginning of the war, and then Burr married her. No more ideal family life could be conceived than his, and the letters which passed between the two are full of adoration. Thus she wrote to him:

> Tell me, why do I grow every day more tenacious of your regard? Is it because each revolving day proves you more deserving?

And thus Burr answered her:

> Continue to multiply your letters to me. They are all my solace. The last six are constantly within my reach. I read them once a day at least. Write me all that I have asked, and a hundred things which I have not.

When it is remembered that these letters were written after nine years of marriage it is hard to believe all the evil things that have been said of Burr.

His wife died in 1794, and he then gave a double affection to his daughter Theodosia, whose beauty and accomplishments were known throughout the country. Burr took the greatest pains in her education, and believed that she

should be trained, as he had been, to be brave, industrious, and patient. He himself, who has been described as a voluptuary, delighted in the endurance of cold and heat and of severe labor.

After his death one of his younger admirers was asked what Burr had done for him. The reply was characteristic.

"He made me iron," was the answer.

No father ever gave more attention to his daughter's welfare. As to Theodosia's studies he was very strict, making her read Greek and Latin every day, with drawing and music and history, in addition to French. Not long before her marriage to Joseph Allston, of South Carolina, Burr wrote to her:

> I really think, my dear Theo, that you will be very soon beyond all verbal criticism, and that my whole attention will be presently directed to the improvement of your style.

Theodosia Burr married into a family of good old English stock, where riches were abundant, and high character was regarded as the best of all possessions. Every one has heard of the mysterious tragedy which is associated with her history. In 1812, when her husband had been elected Governor of his state, her only

child—a sturdy boy of eleven—died, and Theodosia's health was shattered by her sorrow. In the same year Burr returned from a sojourn in Europe, and his loving daughter embarked from Charleston on a schooner, the *Patriot*, to meet her father in New York. When Burr arrived he was met by a letter which told him that his grandson was dead and that Theodosia was coming to him.

Weeks sped by, and no news was heard of the ill-fated *Patriot*. At last it became evident that she must have gone down or in some other way have been lost. Burr and Governor Allston wrote to each other letter after letter, of which each one seems to surpass the agony of the other. At last all hope was given up. Governor Allston died soon after of a broken heart; but Burr, as became a Stoic, acted otherwise.

He concealed everything that reminded him of Theodosia. He never spoke of his lost daughter. His grief was too deep-seated and too terrible for speech. Only once did he ever allude to her, and this was in a letter written to an afflicted friend, which contained the words:

> Ever since the event which separated me from mankind I have been able neither to give nor to receive consolation.

In time the crew of a pirate vessel was captured and sentenced to be hanged. One of the men, who seemed to be less brutal than the rest, told how, in 1812, they had captured a schooner, and, after their usual practice, had compelled the passengers to walk the plank. All hesitated and showed cowardice, except only one—a beautiful woman whose eyes were as bright and whose bearing was as unconcerned as if she were safe on shore. She quickly led the way, and, mounting the plank with a certain scorn of death, said to the others:

"Come, I will show you how to die."

It has always been supposed that this intrepid girl may have been Theodosia Allston. If so, she only acted as her father would have done and in strict accordance with his teachings.

This resolute courage, this stern joy in danger, this perfect equanimity, made Burr especially attractive to women, who love courage, the more so when it is coupled with gentleness and generosity.

Perhaps no man in our country has been so vehemently accused regarding his relations with the other sex. The most improbable stories were told about him, even by his friends. As

to his enemies, they took boundless pains to paint him in the blackest colors. According to them, no woman was safe from his intrigues. He was a perfect devil in leading them astray and then casting them aside.

Thus one Matthew L. Davis, in whom Burr had confided as a friend, wrote of him long afterward a most unjust account—unjust because we have proofs that it was false in the intensity of its abuse. Davis wrote:

> It is truly surprising how any individual could become so eminent as a soldier, as a statesman, and as a professional man who devoted so much time to the other sex as was devoted by Colonel Burr. For more than half a century of his life they seemed to absorb his whole thought. His intrigues were without number; the sacred bonds of friendship were unhesitatingly violated when they operated as barriers to the indulgence of his passions. In this particular Burr appears to have been unfeeling and heartless.

It is impossible to believe that the Spartan Burr, whose life was one of incessant labor and whose kindliness toward every one was so well known, should have deserved a commentary like this. The charge of immorality is so easily made and so difficult of disproof that it has been flung promiscuously at all the great men of history, including, in our own country, Wash-

ington and Jefferson as well as Burr. In England, when Gladstone was more than seventy years of age, he once stopped to ask a question of a woman in the street. Within twenty-four hours the London clubs were humming with a sort of demoniac glee over the story that this aged and austere old gentleman was not above seeking common street amours.

And so with Aaron Burr to a great extent. That he was a man of strict morality it would be absurd to maintain. That he was a reckless and licentious profligate would be almost equally untrue. Mr. H. C. Merwin has very truly said:

> Part of Burr's reputation for profligacy was due, no doubt, to that vanity respecting women of which Davis himself speaks. He never refused to accept the parentage of a child.
>
> "Why do you allow this woman to saddle you with her child when you *know* you are not the father of it?" said a friend to him a few months before his death.
>
> "Sir," he replied, "when a lady does me the honor to name me the father of her child I trust I shall always be too gallant to show myself ungrateful for the favor."

There are two curious legends relating to Aaron Burr. They serve to show that his repu-

tation became such that he could not enjoy the society of a woman without having her regarded as his mistress.

When he was United States Senator from New York he lived in Philadelphia at the lodging-house of a Mrs. Payne, whose daughter, Dorothy Todd, was the very youthful widow of an officer. This young woman was rather free in her manners, and Burr was very responsive in his. At the time, however, nothing was thought of it; but presently Burr brought to the house the serious and somewhat pedantic James Madison and introduced him to the hoyden.

Madison was then forty-seven years of age, a stranger to society, but gradually rising to a prominent position in politics—"the great little Madison," as Burr rather lightly called him. Before very long he had proposed marriage to the young widow. She hesitated, and some one referred the matter to President Washington. The Father of his Country answered in what was perhaps the only opinion that he ever gave on the subject of matrimony. It is worth preserving because it shows that he had a sense of humor:

For my own part, I never did nor do I believe I ever shall give advice to a woman who is setting out

on a matrimonial voyage. . . . A woman very rarely asks an opinion or seeks advice on such an occasion till her mind is wholly made up, and then it is with the hope and expectation of obtaining a sanction, and not that she means to be governed by your disapproval.

Afterward when Dolly Madison with her yellow turban and kittenish ways was making a sensation in Washington society some one recalled her old association with Burr. At once the story sprang to light that Burr had been her lover and that he had brought about the match with Madison as an easy way of getting rid of her.

There is another curious story which makes Martin Van Buren, eighth President of the United States, to have been the illegitimate son of Aaron Burr. There is no earthly reason for believing this, except that Burr sometimes stopped overnight at the tavern in Kinderhook which was kept by Van Buren's putative father, and that Van Buren in later life showed an astuteness equal to that of Aaron Burr himself, so that he was called by his opponents "the fox of Kinderhook." But, as Van Buren was born in December of the same year (1782) in which Burr was married to Theodosia Prevost, the story is utterly improbable when we

remember, as we must, the ardent affection which Burr showed his wife, not only before their marriage, but afterward until her death.

Putting aside these purely spurious instances, as well as others cited by Mr. Parton, the fact remains that Aaron Burr, like Daniel Webster, found a great attraction in the society of women; that he could please them and fascinate them to an extraordinary degree; and that during his later life he must be held quite culpable in this respect. His love-making was ardent and rapid, as we shall afterward see in the case of his second marriage.

Many other stories are told of him. For instance, it is said that he once took a stage-coach from Jersey City to Philadelphia. The only other occupant was a woman of high standing and one whose family deeply hated Aaron Burr. Nevertheless, so the story goes, before they had reached Newark she was absolutely swayed by his charm of manner; and when the coach made its last stop before Philadelphia she voluntarily became his mistress.

It must also be said that, unlike those of Webster and Hamilton, his intrigues were never carried on with women of the lower sort.

This may be held by some to deepen the charge against him; but more truly does it exonerate him, since it really means that in many cases these women of the world threw themselves at him and sought him as a lover, when otherwise he might never have thought of them.

That he was not heartless and indifferent to those who had loved him may be shown by the great care which he took to protect their names and reputations. Thus, on the day before his duel with Hamilton, he made a will in which he constituted his son-in-law as his executor. At the same time he wrote a sealed letter to Governor Allston in which he said:

> If you can pardon and indulge a folly, I would suggest that Mme. ——, too well known under the name of Leonora, has claims on my recollection. She is now with her husband at Santiago, in Cuba.

Another fact has been turned to his discredit. From many women, in the course of his long life, he had received a great quantity of letters written by aristocratic hands on scented paper, and these letters he had never burned. Here again, perhaps, was shown the vanity of the man who loved love for its own sake. He kept all these papers in a huge iron-clamped chest,

and he instructed Theodosia in case he should die to burn every letter which might injure any one.

After Theodosia's death Burr gave the same instructions to Matthew L. Davis, who did, indeed, burn them, though he made their existence a means of blackening the character of Burr. He should have destroyed them unopened, and should never have mentioned them in his memoirs of the man who trusted him as a friend.

Such was Aaron Burr throughout a life which lasted for eighty years. His last romance, at the age of seventy-eight, is worth narrating because it has often been misunderstood.

Mme. Jumel was a Rhode Island girl who at seventeen years of age eloped with an English officer, Colonel Peter Croix. Her first husband died while she was still quite young, and she then married a French wine-merchant, Stephen Jumel, some twenty years her senior, but a man of much vigor and intelligence. M. Jumel made a considerable fortune in New York, owning a small merchant fleet; and after Napoleon's downfall he and his wife went to Paris, where she made a great impression in the *salons* by

her vivacity and wit and by her lavish expenditures.

Losing, however, part of what she and her husband possessed, Mme. Jumel returned to New York, bringing with her a great amount of furniture and paintings, with which she decorated the historic house still standing in the upper part of Manhattan Island—a mansion held by her in her own right. She managed her estate with much ability; and in 1828 M. Jumel returned to live with her in what was in those days a splendid villa.

Four years later, however, M. Jumel suffered an accident from which he died in a few days, leaving his wife still an attractive woman and not very much past her prime. Soon after she had occasion to seek for legal advice, and for this purpose visited the law-office of Aaron Burr. She had known him a good many years before; and, though he was now seventy-eight years of age, there was no perceptible change in him. He was still courtly in manner, tactful, and deferential, while physically he was straight, active, and vigorous.

A little later she invited him to a formal banquet, where he displayed all his charms and

shone to great advantage. When he was about to lead her in to dinner, he said:

"I give my hand, madam; my heart has long been yours."

These attentions he followed up with several other visits, and finally proposed that she should marry him. Much fluttered and no less flattered, she uttered a sort of "No" which was not likely to discourage a man like Aaron Burr.

"I shall come to you before very long," he said, "accompanied by a clergyman; and then you will give me your hand because I want it."

This rapid sort of wooing was pleasantly embarrassing. The lady rather liked it; and so, on an afternoon when the sun was shining and the leaves were rustling in the breeze, Burr drove up to Mme. Jumel's mansion accompanied by Dr. Bogart—the very clergyman who had married him to his first wife fifty years before.

Mme. Jumel was now seriously disturbed, but her refusal was not a strong one. There were reasons why she should accept the offer. The great house was lonely. The management of her estate required a man's advice. Moreover, she was under the spell of Burr's fascination. Therefore she arrayed herself in one of

her most magnificent Paris gowns; the members of her household and eight servants were called in and the ceremony was duly performed by Dr. Bogart. A banquet followed. A dozen cobwebbed bottles of wine were brought up from the cellar, and the marriage feast went on merrily until after midnight.

This marriage was a singular one from many points of view. It was strange that a man of seventy-eight should take by storm the affections of a woman so much younger than he—a woman of wealth and knowledge of the world. In the second place, it is odd that there was still another woman—a mere girl—who was so infatuated with Burr that when she was told of his marriage it nearly broke her heart. Finally, in the early part of that same year he had been accused of being the father of a new-born child, and in spite of his age every one believed the charge to be true. Here is a case that it would be hard to parallel.

The happiness of the newly married pair did not, however, last very long. They made a wedding journey into Connecticut, of which state Burr's nephew was then Governor, and there Burr saw a monster bridge over the Connecticut River, in which his wife had shares,

though they brought her little income. He suggested that she should transfer the investment, which, after all, was not a very large one, and place it in a venture in Texas which looked promising. The speculation turned out to be a loss, however, and this made Mrs. Burr extremely angry, the more so as she had reason to think that her ever-youthful husband had been engaged in flirting with the country girls near the Jumel mansion.

She was a woman of high spirit and had at times a violent temper. One day the postmaster at what was then the village of Harlem was surprised to see Mrs. Burr drive up before the post-office in an open carriage. He came out to ask what she desired, and was surprised to find her in a violent temper and with an enormous horse-pistol on each cushion at her side.

"What do you wish, madam?" said he, rather mildly.

"What do I wish?" she cried. "Let me get at that villain Aaron Burr!"

Presently Burr seems to have succeeded in pacifying her; but in the end they separated, though she afterward always spoke most kindly of him. When he died, only about a year later,

she is said to have burst into a flood of tears—another tribute to the fascination which Aaron Burr exercised through all his checkered life.

It is difficult to come to any fixed opinion regarding the moral character of Aaron Burr. As a soldier he was brave to the point of recklessness. As a political leader he was almost the equal of Jefferson and quite superior to Hamilton. As a man of the world he was highly accomplished, polished in manner, charming in conversation. He made friends easily, and he forgave his enemies with a broadmindedness that is unusual.

On the other hand, in his political career there was a touch of insincerity, and it can scarcely be denied that he used his charm too often to the injury of those women who could not resist his insinuating ways and the caressing notes of his rich voice. But as a husband, in his youth, he was devoted, affectionate, and loyal; while as a father he was little less than worshiped by the daughter whom he reared so carefully.

One of his biographers very truly says that no such wretch as Burr has been declared to be could have won and held the love of such a wife and such a daughter as Burr had.

When all the other witnesses have been heard, let the two Theodosias be summoned, and especially that daughter who showed toward him an affectionate veneration unsurpassed by any recorded in history or romance. Such an advocate as Theodosia the younger must avail in some degree, even though the culprit were brought before the bar of Heaven itself.

GEORGE IV. AND MRS. FITZHERBERT

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IN the last decade of the eighteenth century England was perhaps the most brilliant nation of the world. Other countries had been humbled by the splendid armies of France and were destined to be still further humbled by the emperor who came from Corsica. France had begun to seize the scepter of power; yet to this picture there was another side—fearful want and grievous poverty and the horrors of the Revolution. Russia was too far away, and was still considered too barbarous, for a brilliant court to flourish there. Prussia had the prestige that Frederick the Great won for her, but she was still a comparatively small state. Italy was in a condition of political chaos; the banks of the Rhine were running blood where the Austrian armies faced the gallant Frenchmen under the leadership of Moreau. But England, in spite of the loss of her American colonies, was rich and prosperous, and her invincible fleets were extending her empire over the seven seas.

At no time in modern England has the court at London seen so much real splendor or such fine manners. The royalist *émigrés* who fled from France brought with them names and pedigrees that were older than the Crusades, and many of them were received with the frankest, freest English hospitality. If here and there some marquis or baron of ancient blood was perforce content to teach music to the daughters of tradesmen in suburban schools, nevertheless they were better off than they had been in France, harried by the savage gaze-hounds of the guillotine. Afterward, in the days of the Restoration, when they came back to their estates, they had probably learned more than one lesson from the *bouledogues* of Merry England, who had little tact, perhaps, but who were at any rate kindly and willing to share their goods with pinched and poverty-stricken foreigners.

The court, then, as has been said, was brilliant with notables from Continental countries, and with the historic wealth of the peerage of England. Only one cloud overspread it; and that was the mental condition of the king. We have become accustomed to think of George III. as a dull creature, almost always hovering on

the verge of that insanity which finally swept him into a dark obscurity; but Thackeray's picture of him is absurdly untrue to the actual facts. George III. was by no means a dullard, nor was he a sort of beefy country squire who roved about the palace gardens with his unattractive spouse.

Obstinate enough he was, and ready for a combat with the rulers of the Continent or with his self-willed sons; but he was a man of brains and power, and Lord Rosebery has rightly described him as the most striking constitutional figure of his time. Had he retained his reason, and had his erratic and self-seeking son not succeeded him during his own lifetime, Great Britain might very possibly have entered upon other ways than those which opened to her after the downfall of Napoleon.

The real center of fashionable England, however, was not George III., but rather his son, subsequently George IV., who was made Prince of Wales three days after his birth, and who became prince regent during the insanity of the king. He was the leader of the social world, the fit companion of Beau Brummel and of a choice circle of rakes and fox-hunters who drank bottle-deep. Some called him "the first gen-

tleman of Europe." Others, who knew him better, described him as one who never kept his word to man or woman and who lacked the most elementary virtues.

Yet it was his good luck during the first years of his regency to be popular as few English kings have ever been. To his people he typified old England against revolutionary France; and his youth and gaiety made many like him. He drank and gambled; he kept packs of hounds and strings of horses; he ran deeply into debt that he might patronize the sports of that uproarious day. He was a gallant "Corinthian," a haunter of dens where there were prize-fights and cock-fights, and there was hardly a doubtful resort in London where his face was not familiar.

He was much given to gallantry—not so much, as it seemed, for wantonness, but from sheer love of mirth and chivalry. For a time, with his chosen friends, such as Fox and Sheridan, he ventured into reckless intrigues that recalled the amours of his predecessor, Charles II. He had by no means the wit and courage of Charles; and, indeed, the house of Hanover lacked the outward show of chivalry which made the Stuarts shine with external splendor.

But he was good-looking and stalwart, and when he had half a dozen robust comrades by his side he could assume a very manly appearance. Such was George IV. in his regency and in his prime. He made that period famous for its card-playing, its deep drinking, and for the dissolute conduct of its courtiers and noblemen no less than for the gallantry of its soldiers and its momentous victories on sea and land. It came, however, to be seen that his true achievements were in reality only escapades, that his wit was only folly, and his so-called "sensibility" was but sham. He invented buckles, striped waistcoats, and flamboyant collars, but he knew nothing of the principles of kingship or the laws by which a state is governed.

The fact that he had promiscuous affairs with women appealed at first to the popular sense of the romantic. It was not long, however, before these episodes were trampled down into the mire of vulgar scandal.

One of the first of them began when he sent a letter, signed "Florizel," to a young actress, "Perdita" Robinson. Mrs. Robinson, whose maiden name was Mary Darby, and who was the original of famous portraits by Gainsborough and Reynolds, was a woman of beauty,

talent, and temperament. George, wishing in every way to be "romantic," insisted upon clandestine meetings on the Thames at Kew, with all the stage trappings of the popular novels—cloaks, veils, faces hidden, and armed watchers to warn her of approaching danger. Poor Perdita took this nonsense so seriously that she gave up her natural vocation for the stage, and forsook her husband, believing that the prince would never weary of her.

He did weary of her very soon, and, with the brutality of a man of such a type, turned her away with the promise of some money; after which he cut her in the Park and refused to speak to her again. As for the money, he may have meant to pay it, but Perdita had a long struggle before she succeeded in getting it. It may be assumed that the prince had to borrow it and that this obligation formed part of the debts which Parliament paid for him.

It is not necessary to number the other women whose heads he turned. They are too many for remembrance here, and they have no special significance, save one who, as is generally believed, became his wife so far as the church could make her so. An act of 1772 had made it illegal for any member of the English

royal family to marry without the permission of the king. A marriage contracted without the king's consent might be lawful in the eyes of the church, but the children born of it could not inherit any claim to the throne.

It may be remarked here that this withholding of permission was strictly enforced. Thus William IV., who succeeded George IV., was married, before his accession to the throne, to Mrs. Jordan (Dorothy Bland). Afterward he lawfully married a woman of royal birth who was known as Queen Adelaide.

There is an interesting story which tells how Queen Victoria came to be born because her father, the Duke of Kent, was practically forced to give up a morganatic union which he greatly preferred to a marriage arranged for him by Parliament. Except the Duke of Cambridge, the Duke of Kent was the only royal duke who was likely to have children in the regular line. The only daughter of George IV. had died in childhood. The Duke of Cumberland was for various reasons ineligible; the Duke of Clarence, later King William IV., was almost too old; and therefore, to insure the succession, the Duke of Kent was begged to marry a young and attractive woman, a princess of the house of

Saxe-Coburg, who was ready for the honor. It was greatly to the Duke's credit that he showed deep and sincere feeling in this matter. As he said himself in effect:

"This French lady has stood by me in hard times and in good times, too—why should I cast her off? She has been more than a wife to me. And what do I care for your plans in Parliament? Send over for one of the Stuarts—they are better men than the last lot of our fellows that you have had!"

In the end, however, he was wearied out and was persuaded to marry, but he insisted that a generous sum should be settled on the lady who had been so long his true companion, and to whom, no doubt, he gave many a wistful thought in his new but unfamiliar quarters in Kensington Palace, which was assigned as his residence.

Again, the second Duke of Cambridge, who died only a few years ago, greatly desired to marry a lady who was not of royal rank, though of fine breeding and of good birth. He besought his young cousin, as head of the family, to grant him this privilege of marriage; but Queen Victoria stubbornly refused. The duke was married according to the rites of the church, but he could not make his wife a duchess. The queen

never quite forgave him for his partial defiance of her wishes, though the duke's wife—she was usually spoken of as Mrs. FitzGeorge—was received almost everywhere, and two of her sons hold high rank in the British army and navy, respectively.

The one real lovestory in the life of George IV. is that which tells of his marriage with a lady who might well have been the wife of any king. This was Maria Anne Smythe, better known as Mrs. Fitzherbert, who was six years older than the young prince when she first met him in company with a body of gentlemen and ladies in 1784.

Maria Fitzherbert's face was one which always displayed its best advantages. Her eyes were peculiarly languishing, and, as she had already been twice a widow, and was six years his senior, she had the advantage over a less experienced lover. Likewise, she was a Catholic, and so by another act of Parliament any marriage with her would be illegal. Yet just because of all these different objections the prince was doubly drawn to her, and was willing to sacrifice even the throne if he could but win her.

His father, the king, called him into the royal presence and said:

"George, it is time that you should settle down and insure the succession to the throne."

"Sir," replied the prince, "I prefer to resign the succession and let my brother have it, and that I should live as a private English gentleman."

Mrs. Fitzherbert was not the sort of woman to give herself up readily to a morganatic connection. Moreover, she soon came to love Prince George too well to entangle him in a doubtful alliance with one of another faith than his. Not long after he first met her the prince, who was always given to private theatricals, sent messengers riding in hot haste to her house to tell her that he had stabbed himself, that he begged to see her, and that unless she came he would repeat the act. The lady yielded, and hurried to Carlton House, the prince's residence; but she was prudent enough to take with her the Duchess of Devonshire, who was a reigning beauty of the court.

The scene which followed was theatrical rather than impressive. The prince was found in his sleeping-chamber, pale and with his ruffles blood-stained. He played the part of a youthful and love-stricken wooer, vowing that he would marry the woman of his heart or stab

himself again. In the presence of his messengers, who, with the duchess, were witnesses, he formally took the lady as his wife, while Lady Devonshire's wedding-ring sealed the troth. The prince also acknowledged it in a document.

Mrs. Fitzherbert was, in fact, a woman of sound sense. Shortly after this scene of melodramatic intensity her wits came back to her, and she recognized that she had merely gone through a meaningless farce. So she sent back the prince's document and the ring and hastened to the Continent, where he could not reach her, although his detectives followed her steps for a year.

At the last she yielded, however, and came home to marry the prince in such fashion as she could—a marriage of love, and surely one of morality, though not of parliamentary law. The ceremony was performed "in her own drawing-room in her house in London, in the presence of the officiating Protestant clergyman and two of her own nearest relatives."

Such is the serious statement of Lord Stourton, who was Mrs. Fitzherbert's cousin and confidant. The truth of it was never denied, and Mrs. Fitzherbert was always treated with re-

spect, and even regarded as a person of great distinction. Nevertheless, on more than one occasion the prince had his friends in Parliament deny the marriage in order that his debts might be paid and new allowances issued to him by the Treasury.

George certainly felt himself a husband. Like any other married prince, he set himself to build a palace for his country home. While in search of some suitable spot he chanced to visit the "pretty fishing-village" of Brighton to see his uncle, the Duke of Cumberland. Doubtless he found it an attractive place, yet this may have been not so much because of its view of the sea as for the reason that Mrs. Fitzherbert had previously lived there.

However, in 1784 the prince sent down his chief cook to make arrangements for the next royal visit. The cook engaged a house on the spot where the Pavilion now stands, and from that time Brighton began to be an extremely fashionable place. The court doctors, giving advice that was agreeable, recommended their royal patient to take sea-bathing at Brighton. At once the place sprang into popularity.

At first the gentry were crowded into lodging-houses and the accommodations were primitive

to a degree. But soon handsome villas arose on every side; hotels appeared; places of amusement were opened. The prince himself began to build a tasteless but showy structure, partly Chinese and partly Indian in style, on the fashionable promenade of the Steyne.

During his life with Mrs. Fitzherbert at Brighton the prince held what was practically a court. Hundreds of the aristocracy came down from London and made their temporary dwellings there; while thousands who were by no means of the court made the place what is now popularly called "London by the Sea." There were the Duc de Chartres, of France; statesmen and rakes, like Fox, Sheridan, and the Earl of Barrymore; a very beautiful woman, named Mrs. Couch, a favorite singer at the opera, to whom the prince gave at one time jewels worth ten thousand pounds; and a sister of the Earl of Barrymore, who was as notorious as her brother. She often took the president's chair at a club which George's friends had organized and which she had christened the Hell Fire Club.

Such persons were not the only visitors at Brighton. Men of much more serious demeanor came down to visit the prince and brought with

them quieter society. Nevertheless, for a considerable time the place was most noted for its wild scenes of revelry, into which George frequently entered, though his home life with Mrs. Fitzherbert at the Pavilion was a decorous one.

No one felt any doubt as to the marriage of the two persons, who seemed so much like a prince and a princess. Some of the people of the place addressed Mrs. Fitzherbert as "Mrs. Prince." The old king and his wife, however, much deplored their son's relation with her. This was partly due to the fact that Mrs. Fitzherbert was a Catholic and that she had received a number of French nuns who had been driven out of France at the time of the Revolution. But no less displeasure was caused by the prince's racing and dicing, which swelled his debts to almost a million pounds, so that Parliament and, indeed, the sober part of England were set against him.

Of course, his marriage to Mrs. Fitzherbert had no legal status; nor is there any reason for believing that she ever became a mother. She had no children by her former two husbands, and Lord Stourton testified positively that she never had either son or daughter by Prince George. Nevertheless, more than one Amer-

ican claimant has risen to advance some utterly visionary claim to the English throne by reason of alleged descent from Prince George and Mrs. Fitzherbert.

Neither William IV. nor Queen Victoria ever spent much time at Brighton. In King William's case it was explained that the dampness of the Pavilion did not suit him; and as to Queen Victoria, it was said that she disliked the fact that buildings had been erected so as to cut off the view of the sea. It is quite likely, however, that the queen objected to the associations of the place, and did not care to be reminded of the time when her uncle had lived there so long in a morganatic state of marriage.

At length the time came when the king, Parliament, and the people at large insisted that the Prince of Wales should make a legal marriage, and a wife was selected for him in the person of Caroline, daughter of the Duke of Brunswick. This marriage took place exactly ten years after his wedding with the beautiful and gentle-mannered Mrs. Fitzherbert. With the latter he had known many days and hours of happiness. With Princess Caroline he had no happiness at all.

Prince George met her at the pier to greet

her. It is said that as he took her hand he kissed her, and then, suddenly recoiling, he whispered to one of his friends:

"For God's sake, George, give me a glass of brandy!"

Such an utterance was more brutal and barbaric than anything his bride could have conceived of, though it is probable, fortunately, that she did not understand him by reason of her ignorance of English.

We need not go through the unhappy story of this unsympathetic, neglected, rebellious wife. Her life with the prince soon became one of open warfare; but instead of leaving England she remained to set the kingdom in an uproar. As soon as his father died and he became king, George sued her for divorce. Half the people sided with the queen, while the rest regarded her as a vulgar creature who made love to her attendants and brought dishonor on the English throne. It was a sorry, sordid contrast between the young Prince George who had posed as a sort of cavalier and this now furious gray old man wrangling with his furious German wife.

Well might he look back to the time when he met Perdita in the moonlight on the Thames,

or when he played the part of Florizel, or, better still, when he enjoyed the sincere and disinterested love of the gentle woman who was his wife in all but legal status. Caroline of Brunswick was thrust away from the king's coronation. She took a house within sight of Westminster Abbey, so that she might make haglike screeches to the mob and to the king as he passed by. Presently, in August, 1821, only a month after the coronation, she died, and her body was taken back to Brunswick for burial.

George himself reigned for nine years longer. When he died in 1830 his executor was the Duke of Wellington. The duke, in examining the late king's private papers, found that he had kept with the greatest care every letter written to him by his morganatic wife. During his last illness she had sent him an affectionate missive which it is said George "read eagerly." Mrs. Fitzherbert wished the duke to give up her letters; but he would do so only in return for those which he had written to her.

It was finally decided that it would be best to burn both his and hers. This work was carried out in Mrs. Fitzherbert's own house by the lady, the duke, and the Earl of Albemarle.

Of George it may be said that he has left as memories behind him only three things that will be remembered. The first is the Pavilion at Brighton, with its absurdly oriental decorations, its minarets and flimsy towers. The second is the buckle which he invented and which Thackeray has immortalized with his biting satire. The last is the story of his marriage to Maria Fitzherbert, and of the influence exercised upon him by the affection of a good woman.

CHARLOTTE CORDAY AND ADAM LUX

CHARLOTTE CORDAY AND ADAM LUX

PERHAPS some readers will consider this story inconsistent with those that have preceded it. Yet, as it is little known to most readers and as it is perhaps unique in the history of romantic love, I cannot forbear relating it; for I believe that it is full of curious interest and pathetic power.

All those who have written of the French Revolution have paused in their chronicle of blood and flame to tell the episode of the peasant Royalist, Charlotte Corday; but in telling it they have often omitted the one part of the story that is personal and not political. The tragic record of this French girl and her self-sacrifice has been told a thousand times by writers in many languages; yet almost all of them have neglected the brief romance which followed her daring deed and which was consummated after her death upon the guillotine. It is worth our while to speak first of Charlotte herself and of the man she slew, and then to

tell that other tale which ought always to be entwined with her great deed of daring.

Charlotte Corday—Marie Anne Charlotte Corday d'Armand—was a native of Normandy, and was descended, as her name implies, from noble ancestors. Her forefathers, indeed, had been statesmen, civil rulers, and soldiers, and among them was numbered the famous poet Corneille, whom the French rank with Shakespeare. But a century or more of vicissitudes had reduced her branch of the family almost to the position of peasants—a fact which partly justifies the name that some give her when they call her "the Jeanne d'Arc of the Revolution."

She did not, however, spend her girlish years amid the fields and woods tending her sheep, as did the other Jeanne d'Arc; but she was placed in charge of the sisters in a convent, and from them she received such education as she had. She was a lonely child, and her thoughts turned inward, brooding over many things.

After she had left the convent she was sent to live with an aunt. Here she devoted herself to reading over and over the few books which the house contained. These consisted largely of the deistic writers, especially Voltaire, and to some extent they destroyed her

convent faith, though it is not likely that she understood them very fully.

More to her taste was a copy of Plutarch's *Lives*. These famous stories fascinated her. They told her of battle and siege, of intrigue and heroism, and of that romantic love of country which led men to throw away their lives for the sake of a whole people. Brutus and Regulus were her heroes. To die for the many seemed to her the most glorious end that any one could seek. When she thought of it she thrilled with a sort of ecstasy, and longed with all the passion of her nature that such a glorious fate might be her own.

Charlotte had nearly come to womanhood at the time when the French Revolution first broke out. Royalist though she had been in her sympathies, she felt the justice of the people's cause. She had seen the suffering of the peasantry, the brutality of the tax-gatherers, and all the oppression of the old régime. But what she hoped for was a democracy of order and equality and peace. Could the king reign as a constitutional monarch rather than as a despot, this was all for which she cared.

In Normandy, where she lived, were many of those moderate republicans known as Girond-

ists, who felt as she did and who hoped for the same peaceful end to the great outbreak. On the other hand, in Paris, the party of the Mountain, as it was called, ruled with a savage violence that soon was to culminate in the Reign of Terror. Already the guillotine ran red with noble blood. Already the king had bowed his head to the fatal knife. Already the threat had gone forth that a mere breath of suspicion or a pointed finger might be enough to lead men and women to a gory death.

In her quiet home near Caen Charlotte Corday heard as from afar the story of this dreadful saturnalia of assassination which was making Paris a city of bloody mist. Men and women of the Girondist party came to tell her of the hideous deeds that were perpetrated there. All these horrors gradually wove themselves in the young girl's imagination around the sinister and repulsive figure of Jean Paul Marat. She knew nothing of his associates, Danton and Robespierre. It was in Marat alone that she saw the monster who sent innocent thousands to their graves, and who reveled like some arch-fiend in murder and gruesome death.

In his earlier years Marat had been a very different figure—an accomplished physician, the

friend of nobles, a man of science and original thought, so that he was nearly elected to the Academy of Sciences. His studies in electricity gained for him the admiration of Benjamin Franklin and the praise of Goethe. But when he turned to politics he left all this career behind him. He plunged into the very mire of red republicanism, and even there he was for a time so much hated that he sought refuge in London to save his life.

On his return he was hunted by his enemies, so that his only place of refuge was in the sewers and drains of Paris. A woman, one Simonne Evrard, helped him to escape his pursuers. In the sewers, however, he contracted a dreadful skin-disease from which he never afterward recovered, and which was extremely painful as well as shocking to behold.

It is small wonder that the stories about Marat circulated through the provinces made him seem more a devil than a man. His vindictiveness against the Girondists brought all of this straight home to Charlotte Corday and led her to dream of acting the part of Brutus, so that she might free her country from this hideous tyrant.

In January, 1793, King Louis XVI. met his

death upon the scaffold; and the queen was thrust into a foul prison. This was a signal for activity among the Girondists in Normandy, and especially at Caen, where Charlotte was present at their meetings and heard their fervid oratory. There was a plot to march on Paris, yet in some instinctive way she felt that such a scheme must fail. It was then that she definitely formed the plan of going herself, alone, to the French capital to seek out the hideous Marat and to kill him with her own hands.

To this end she made application for a passport allowing her to visit Paris. This passport still exists, and it gives us an official description of the girl. It reads:

> Allow citizen Marie Corday to pass. She is twenty-four years of age, five feet and one inch in height, hair and eyebrows chestnut color, eyes gray, forehead high, mouth medium size, chin dimpled, and an oval face.

Apart from this verbal description we have two portraits painted while she was in prison. Both of them make the description of the passport seem faint and pale. The real Charlotte had a wealth of chestnut hair which fell about her face and neck in glorious abundance. Her

great gray eyes spoke eloquently of truth and courage. Her mouth was firm yet winsome, and her form combined both strength and grace. Such is the girl who, on reaching Paris, wrote to Marat in these words:

> Citizen, I have just arrived from Caen. Your love for your native place doubtless makes you wish to learn the events which have occurred in that part of the republic. I shall call at your residence in about an hour. Be so good as to receive me and give me a brief interview. I will put you in such condition as to render great service to France.

This letter failed to gain her admission, and so did another which she wrote soon after. The fact is that Marat was grievously ill. His disease had reached a point where the pain could be assuaged only by hot water; and he spent the greater part of his time wrapped in a blanket and lying in a large tub.

A third time, however, the persistent girl called at his house and insisted that she must see him, saying that she was herself in danger from the enemies of the Republic. Through an open door Marat heard her mellow voice and gave orders that she should be admitted.

As she entered she gazed for a moment upon the lank figure rolling in the tub, the ratlike

face, and the shifting eyes. Then she approached him, concealing in the bosom of her dress a long carving-knife which she had purchased for two francs. In answer to Marat's questioning look she told him that there was much excitement at Caen and that the Girondists were plotting there.

To this Marat answered, in his harsh voice:

"All these men you mention shall be guillotined in the next few days!"

As he spoke Charlotte flashed out the terrible knife and with all her strength she plunged it into his left side, where it pierced a lung and a portion of his heart.

Marat, with the blood gushing from his mouth, cried out:

"Help, darling!"

His cry was meant for one of the two women in the house. Both heard it, for they were in the next room; and both of them rushed in and succeeded in pinioning Charlotte Corday, who, indeed, made only a slight effort to escape. Troops were summoned, she was taken to the Prison de l'Abbaye, and soon after she was arraigned before the revolutionary tribunal.

Placed in the dock, she glanced about her with an air of pride, as of one who gloried in the act

which she had just performed. A written charge was read. She was asked what she had to say. Lifting her head with a look of infinite satisfaction, she answered in a ringing voice:

"Nothing—except that I succeeded!"

A lawyer was assigned for her defense. He pleaded for her earnestly, declaring that she must be regarded as insane; but those clear, calm eyes and that gentle face made her sanity a matter of little doubt. She showed her quick wit in the answers which she gave to the rough prosecutor, Fouquier-Tinville, who tried to make her confess that she had accomplices.

"Who prompted you to do this deed?" roared Tinville.

"I needed no prompting. My own heart was sufficient."

"In what, then, had Marat wronged you?"

"He was a savage beast who was going to destroy the remains of France in the fires of civil war."

"But whom did you expect to benefit?" insinuated the prosecutor.

"I have killed one man to save a hundred thousand."

"What? Did you imagine that you had murdered all the Marats?"

"No, but, this one being dead, the rest will perhaps take warning."

Thus her directness baffled all the efforts of the prosecution to trap her into betraying any of her friends. The court, however, sentenced her to death. She was then immured in the Conciergerie.

This dramatic court scene was the beginning of that strange, brief romance to which one can scarcely find a parallel. At the time there lived in Paris a young German named Adam Lux. The continual talk about Charlotte Corday had filled him with curiosity regarding this young girl who had been so daring and so patriotic. She was denounced on every hand as a murderess with the face of a Medusa and the muscles of a Vulcan. Street songs about her were dinned into the ears of Adam Lux.

As a student of human nature he was anxious to see this terrible creature. He forced his way to the front of the crowded benches in the court-room and took his stand behind a young artist who was finishing a beautiful sketch. From that moment until the end of the trial the eyes of Adam Lux were fastened on the prisoner. What a contrast to the picture he had imagined!

A mass of regal chestnut hair crowned with the white cap of a Norman peasant girl; gray eyes, very sad and serious, but looking serenely forth from under long, dark lashes; lips slightly curved with an expression of quiet humor; a face the color of the sun and wind, a bust indicative of perfect health, the chin of a Cæsar, and the whole expression one of almost divine self-sacrifice. Such were the features that the painter was swiftly putting upon his canvas; but behind them Adam Lux discerned the soul for which he gladly sacrificed both his liberty and his life.

He forgot his surroundings and seemed to see only that beautiful, pure face and to hear only the exquisite cadences of the wonderful voice. When Charlotte was led forth by a file of soldiers Adam staggered from the scene and made his way as best he might to his lodgings. There he lay prostrate, his whole soul filled with the love of her who had in an instant won the adoration of his heart.

Once, and only once again, when the last scene opened on the tragedy, did he behold the heroine of his dreams.

On the 17th of July Charlotte Corday was taken from her prison to the gloomy guillotine.

It was toward evening, and nature had given a setting fit for such an end. Blue-black thunder-clouds rolled in huge masses across the sky until their base appeared to rest on the very summit of the guillotine. Distant thunder rolled and grumbled beyond the river. Great drops of rain fell upon the soldiers' drums. Young, beautiful, unconscious of any wrong, Charlotte Corday stood beneath the shadow of the knife.

At the supreme moment a sudden ray from the setting sun broke through the cloud-wrack and fell upon her slender figure until she glowed in the eyes of the startled spectators like a statue cut in burnished bronze. Thus illumined, as it were, by a light from heaven itself, she bowed herself beneath the knife and paid the penalty of a noble, if misdirected, impulse. As the blade fell her lips quivered with her last and only plea:

"My duty is enough—the rest is nothing!"

Adam Lux rushed from the scene a man transformed. He bore graven upon his heart neither the mob of tossing red caps nor the glare of the sunset nor the blood-stained guillotine, but that last look from those brilliant eyes. The sight almost deprived him of his

reason. The self-sacrifice of the only woman he had ever loved, even though she had never so much as seen him, impelled him with a sort of fury to his own destruction.

He wrote a bitter denunciation of the judges, of the officers, and of all who had been followers of Marat. This document he printed, and scattered copies of it through every quarter in Paris. The last sentences are as follows:

> The guillotine is no longer a disgrace. It has become a sacred altar, from which every taint has been removed by the innocent blood shed there on the 17th of July. Forgive me, my divine Charlotte, if I find it impossible at the last moment to show the courage and the gentleness that were yours! I glory because you are superior to me, for it is right that she who is adored should be higher and more glorious than her adorer!

This pamphlet, spread broadcast among the people, was soon reported to the leaders of the rabble. Adam Lux was arrested for treason against the Republic; but even these men had no desire to make a martyr of this hot-headed youth. They would stop his mouth without taking his life. Therefore he was tried and speedily found guilty, but an offer was made him that he might have passports that would

allow him to return to Germany if only he would sign a retraction of his printed words.

Little did the judges understand the fiery heart of the man they had to deal with. To die on the same scaffold as the woman whom he had idealized was to him the crowning triumph of his romantic love. He gave a prompt and insolent refusal to their offer. He swore that if released he would denounce his darling's murderers with a still greater passion.

In anger the tribunal sentenced him to death. Only then he smiled and thanked his judges courteously, and soon after went blithely to the guillotine like a bridegroom to his marriage feast.

Adam Lux! Spirit courtship had been carried on silently all through that terrible cross-examination of Charlotte Corday. His heart was betrothed to hers in that single gleam of the setting sun when she bowed beneath the knife. One may believe that these two souls were finally united when the same knife fell sullenly upon his neck and when his life-blood sprinkled the altar that was still stained with hers.

NAPOLEON AND MARIE WALEWSKA

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THERE are four women who may be said to have deeply influenced the life of Napoleon. These four are the only ones who need to be taken into account by the student of his imperial career. The great emperor was susceptible to feminine charms at all times; but just as it used to be said of him that "his smile never rose above his eyes," so it might as truly be said that in most instances the throbbing of his heart did not affect his actions.

Women to him were the creatures of the moment, although he might seem to care for them and to show his affection in extravagant ways, as in his affair with Mlle. Georges, the beautiful but rather tiresome actress. As for Mme. de Staël, she bored him to distraction by her assumption of wisdom. That was not the kind of woman that Napoleon cared for. He preferred that a woman should be womanly, and not a sort of owl to sit and talk with him about the theory of government.

When it came to married women they inter-

ested him only because of the children they might bear to grow up as recruits for his insatiate armies. At the public balls given at the Tuileries he would walk about the gorgeous drawing-rooms, and when a lady was presented to him he would snap out, sharply:

"How many children have you?"

If she were able to answer that she had several the emperor would look pleased and would pay her some compliment; but if she said that she had none he would turn upon her sharply and say:

"Then go home and have some!"

Of the four women who influenced his life, first must come Josephine, because she secured him his earliest chance of advancement. She met him through Barras, with whom she was said to be rather intimate. The young soldier was fascinated by her—the more because she was older than he and possessed all the practised arts of the creole and the woman of the world. When she married him she brought him as her dowry the command of the army of Italy, where in a few months he made the tri-color, borne by ragged troops, triumphant over the splendidly equipped hosts of Austria.

She was his first love, and his knowledge of

her perfidy gave him the greatest shock and horror of his whole life; yet she might have held him to the end if she had borne an heir to the imperial throne. It was her failure to do so that led Napoleon to divorce Josephine and marry the thick-lipped Marie Louise of Austria. There were times later when he showed signs of regret and said:

"I have had no luck since I gave up Josephine!"

Marie Louise was of importance for a time—the short time when she entertained her husband and delighted him by giving birth to the little King of Rome. Yet in the end she was but an episode; fleeing from her husband in his misfortune, becoming the mistress of Count Neipperg, and letting her son—*l'Aiglon*—die in a land that was far from France.

Napoleon's sister, Pauline Bonaparte, was the third woman who comes to mind when we contemplate the great Corsican's career. She, too, is an episode. During the period of his ascendancy she plagued him with her wanton ways, her sauciness and trickery. It was amusing to throw him into one of his violent rages; but Pauline was true at heart, and when her great brother was sent to Elba she followed him

devotedly and gave him all her store of jewels, including the famous Borghese diamonds, perhaps the most superb of all gems known to the western world. She would gladly have followed him, also, to St. Helena had she been permitted. Remaining behind, she did everything possible in conspiring to secure his freedom.

But, after all, Pauline and Marie Louise count for comparatively little. Josephine's fate was interwoven with Napoleon's; and, with his Corsican superstition, he often said so. The fourth woman, of whom I am writing here, may be said to have almost equaled Josephine in her influence on the emperor as well as in the pathos of her life-story.

On New-Year's Day of 1807 Napoleon, who was then almost Emperor of Europe, passed through the little town of Bronia, in Poland. Riding with his cavalry to Warsaw, the ancient capital of the Polish kingdom, he seemed a very demigod of battle.

True, he had had to abandon his long-cherished design of invading and overrunning England, and Nelson had shattered his fleets and practically driven his flag from the sea; but the naval disaster of Trafalgar had speedily been followed by the triumph of Austerlitz, the

greatest and most brilliant of all Napoleon's victories, which left Austria and Russia humbled to the very ground before him.

Then Prussia had dared to defy the overbearing conqueror and had put into the field against him her armies trained by Frederick the Great; but these he had shattered almost at a stroke, winning in one day the decisive battles of Jena and Auerstadt. He had stabled his horses in the royal palace of the Hohenzollerns and had pursued the remnant of the Prussian forces to the Russian border.

As he marched into the Polish provinces the people swarmed by thousands to meet him and hail him as their country's savior. They believed down to the very last that Bonaparte would make the Poles once more a free and independent nation and rescue them from the tyranny of Russia.

Napoleon played upon this feeling in every manner known to his artful mind. He used it to alarm the Czar. He used it to intimidate the Emperor of Austria; but more especially did he use it among the Poles themselves to win for his armies thousands upon thousands of gallant soldiers, who believed that in fighting

for Napoleon they were fighting for the final independence of their native land.

Therefore, with the intensity of patriotism which is a passion among the Poles, every man and every woman gazed at Napoleon with something like adoration; for was not he the mighty warrior who had in his gift what all desired? Soldiers of every rank swarmed to his standards. Princes and nobles flocked about him. Those who stayed at home repeated wonderful stories of his victories and prayed for him and fed the flame which spread through all the country. It was felt that no sacrifice was too great to win his favor; that to him, as to a deity, everything that he desired should be yielded up, since he was to restore the liberty of Poland.

And hence, when the carriage of the emperor dashed into Bronia, surrounded by Polish lancers and French cuirassiers, the enormous crowd surged forward and blocked the way so that their hero could not pass because of their cheers and cries and supplications.

In the midst of it all there came a voice of peculiar sweetness from the thickest portion of the crowd.

"Please let me pass!" said the voice. "Let me see him, if only for a moment!"

The populace rolled backward, and through the lane which they made a beautiful girl with dark blue eyes that flamed and streaming hair that had become loosened about her radiant face was confronting the emperor. Carried away by her enthusiasm, she cried:

"Thrice welcome to Poland! We can do or say nothing to express our joy in the country which you will surely deliver from its tyrant."

The emperor bowed and, with a smile, handed a great bouquet of roses to the girl, for her beauty and her enthusiasm had made a deep impression on him.

"Take it," said he, "as a proof of my admiration. I trust that I may have the pleasure of meeting you at Warsaw and of hearing your thanks from those beautiful lips."

In a moment more the trumpets rang out shrilly, the horsemen closed up beside the imperial carriage, and it rolled away amid the tumultuous shouting of the populace.

The girl who had so attracted Napoleon's attention was Marie Walewska, descended from an ancient though impoverished family in Poland. When she was only fifteen she was courted by one of the wealthiest men in Poland, the Count Walewska. He was three or

four times her age, yet her dark blue eyes, her massive golden hair, and the exquisite grace of her figure led him to plead that she might become his wife. She had accepted him, but the marriage was that of a mere child, and her interest still centered upon her country and took the form of patriotism rather than that of wifehood and maternity.

It was for this reason that the young Countess had visited Bronia. She was now eighteen years of age and still had the sort of romantic feeling which led her to think that she would keep in some secret hiding-place the bouquet which the greatest man alive had given her.

But Napoleon was not the sort of man to forget anything that had given him either pleasure or the reverse. He who, at the height of his cares, could recall instantly how many cannon were in each seaport of France and could make out an accurate list of all his military stores; he who could call by name every soldier in his guard, with a full remembrance of the battles each man had fought in and the honors that he had won—he was not likely to forget so lovely a face as the one which had gleamed with peculiar radiance through the crowd at Bronia.

On reaching Warsaw he asked one or two well-informed persons about this beautiful stranger. Only a few hours had passed before Prince Poniatowski, accompanied by other nobles, called upon her at her home.

"I am directed, madam," said he, "by order of the Emperor of France, to bid you to be present at a ball that is to be given in his honor to-morrow evening."

Mme. Walewska was startled, and her face grew hot with blushes. Did the emperor remember her escapade at Bronia? If so, how had he discovered her? Why should he seek her out and do her such an honor?

"That, madam, is his imperial majesty's affair," Poniatowski told her. "I merely obey his instructions and ask your presence at the ball. Perhaps Heaven has marked you out to be the means of saving our unhappy country."

In this way, by playing on her patriotism, Poniatowski almost persuaded her, and yet something held her back. She trembled, though she was greatly fascinated; and finally she refused to go.

Scarcely had the envoy left her, however, when a great company of nobles entered in groups and begged her to humor the emperor.

Finally her own husband joined in their entreaties and actually commanded her to go; so at last she was compelled to yield.

It was by no means the frank and radiant girl who was now preparing again to meet the emperor. She knew not why, and yet her heart was full of trepidation and nervous fright, the cause of which she could not guess, yet which made her task a severe ordeal. She dressed herself in white satin, with no adornment save a wreath of foliage in her hair.

As she entered the ballroom she was welcomed by hundreds whom she had never seen before, but who were of the highest nobility of Poland. Murmurs of admiration followed her, and finally Poniatowski came to her and complimented her, besides bringing her a message that the emperor desired her to dance with him.

"I am very sorry," she said, with a quiver of the lips, "but I really cannot dance. Be kind enough to ask the emperor to excuse me."

But at that very moment she felt some strange magnetic influence; and without looking up she could feel that Napoleon himself was standing by her as she sat with blanched face and downcast eyes, not daring to look up at him.

"White upon white is a mistake, madam," said the emperor, in his gentlest tones. Then, stooping low, he whispered, "I had expected a far different reception."

She neither smiled nor met his eyes. He stood there for a moment and then passed on, leaving her to return to her home with a heavy heart. The young countess felt that she had acted wrongly, and yet there was an instinct—an instinct that she could not conquer.

In the gray of the morning, while she was still tossing feverishly, her maid knocked at the door and brought her a hastily scribbled note. It ran as follows:

I saw none but you, I admired none but you; I desire only you. Answer at once, and calm the impatient ardor of— N.

These passionate words burned from her eyes the veil that had hidden the truth from her. What before had been mere blind instinct became an actual verity. Why had she at first rushed forth into the very streets to hail the possible deliverer of her country, and then why had she shrunk from him when he sought to honor her? It was all clear enough now. This bedside missive meant that he had intended her

dishonor and that he had looked upon her simply as a possible mistress.

At once she crushed the note angrily in her hand.

"There is no answer at all," said she, bursting into bitter tears at the very thought that he should dare to treat her in this way.

But on the following morning when she awoke her maid was standing beside her with a second letter from Napoleon. She refused to open it and placed it in a packet with the first letter, and ordered that both of them should be returned to the emperor.

She shrank from speaking to her husband of what had happened, and there was no one else in whom she dared confide. All through that day there came hundreds of visitors, either of princely rank or men who had won fame by their gallantry and courage. They all begged to see her, but to them all she sent one answer —that she was ill and could see no one.

After a time her husband burst into her room, and insisted that she should see them.

"Why," exclaimed he, "you are insulting the greatest men and the noblest women of Poland! More than that, there are some of the most distinguished Frenchmen sitting at your doorstep,

as it were. There is Duroc, grand marshal of France, and in refusing to see him you are insulting the great emperor on whom depends everything that our country longs for. Napoleon has invited you to a state dinner and you have given him no answer whatever. I order you to rise at once and receive these ladies and gentlemen who have done you so much honor!"

She could not refuse. Presently she appeared in her drawing-room, where she was at once surrounded by an immense throng of her own countrymen and countrywomen, who made no pretense of misunderstanding the situation. To them, what was one woman's honor when compared with the freedom and independence of their nation? She was overwhelmed by arguments and entreaties. She was even accused of being disloyal to the cause of Poland if she refused her consent.

One of the strangest documents of that period was a letter sent to her and signed by the noblest men in Poland. It contained a powerful appeal to her patriotism. One remarkable passage even quotes the Bible to point out her line of duty. A portion of this letter ran as follows:

Did Esther, think you, give herself to Ahasuerus out of the fulness of her love for him? So great was the terror with which he inspired her that she fainted at the sight of him. We may therefore conclude that affection had but little to do with her resolve. She sacrificed her own inclinations to the salvation of her country, and that salvation it was her glory to achieve. May we be enabled to say the same of you, to your glory and our own happiness!

After this letter came others from Napoleon himself, full of the most humble pleading. It was not wholly distasteful thus to have the conqueror of the world seek her out and offer her his adoration any more than it was distasteful to think that the revival of her own nation depended on her single will. M. Frédéric Masson, whose minute studies regarding everything relating to Napoleon have won him a seat in the French Academy, writes of Marie Walewska at this time:

Every force was now brought into play against her. Her country, her friends, her religion, the Old and the New Testaments, all urged her to yield; they all combined for the ruin of a simple and inexperienced girl of eighteen who had no parents, whose husband even thrust her into temptation, and whose friends thought that her downfall would be her glory.

Amid all these powerful influences she consented to attend the dinner. To her gratifica-

tion Napoleon treated her with distant courtesy, and, in fact, with a certain coldness.

"I heard that Mme. Walewska was indisposed. I trust that she has recovered," was all the greeting that he gave her when they met.

Every one else with whom she spoke overwhelmed her with flattery and with continued urging; but the emperor himself for a time acted as if she had displeased him. This was consummate art; for as soon as she was relieved of her fears she began to regret that she had thrown her power away.

During the dinner she let her eyes wander to those of the emperor almost in supplication. He, the subtlest of men, knew that he had won. His marvelous eyes met hers and drew her attention to him as by an electric current; and when the ladies left the great dining-room Napoleon sought her out and whispered in her ear a few words of ardent love.

It was too little to alarm her seriously now. It was enough to make her feel that magnetism which Napoleon knew so well how to evoke and exercise. Again every one crowded about her with congratulations. Some said:

"He never even saw any of *us*. His eyes

were all for *you!* They flashed fire as he looked at you."

"You have conquered his heart," others said, "and you can do what you like with him. The salvation of Poland is in your hands."

The company broke up at an early hour, but Mme. Walewska was asked to remain. When she was alone General Duroc—one of the emperor's favorite officers and most trusted lieutenants—entered and placed a letter from Napoleon in her lap. He tried to tell her as tactfully as possible how much harm she was doing by refusing the imperial request. She was deeply affected, and presently, when Duroc left her, she opened the letter which he had given her and read it. It was worded thus:

There are times when all splendors become oppressive, as I feel but too deeply at the present moment. How can I satisfy the desires of a heart that yearns to cast itself at your feet, when its impulses are checked at every point by considerations of the highest moment? Oh, if you would, you alone might overcome the obstacles that keep us apart. *My friend Duroc will make all easy for you.* Oh, come, come! Your every wish shall be gratified! Your country will be dearer to me when you take pity on my poor heart.

N.

Every chance of escape seemed to be closed. She had Napoleon's own word that he would free Poland in return for her self-sacrifice. Moreover, her powers of resistance had been so weakened that, like many women, she temporized. She decided that she would meet the emperor alone. She would tell him that she did not love him, and yet would plead with him to save her beloved country.

As she sat there every tick of the clock stirred her to a new excitement. At last there came a knock upon the door, a cloak was thrown about her from behind, a heavy veil was drooped about her golden hair, and she was led, by whom she knew not, to the street, where a finely appointed carriage was waiting for her.

No sooner had she entered it than she was driven rapidly through the darkness to the beautifully carved entrance of a palace. Half led, half carried, she was taken up the steps to a door which was eagerly opened by some one within. There were warmth and light and color and the scent of flowers as she was placed in a comfortable arm-chair. Her wrappings were taken from her, the door was closed behind her; and then, as she looked up, she found herself

in the presence of Napoleon, who was kneeling at her feet and uttering soothing words.

Wisely, the emperor used no violence. He merely argued with her; he told her over and over his love for her; and finally he declared that for her sake he would make Poland once again a strong and splendid kingdom.

Several hours passed. In the early morning, before daylight, there came a knock at the door.

"Already?" said Napoleon. "Well, my plaintive dove, go home and rest. You must not fear the eagle. In time you will come to love him, and in all things you shall command him."

Then he led her to the door, but said that he would not open it unless she promised to see him the next day—a promise which she gave the more readily because he had treated her with such respect.

On the following morning her faithful maid came to her bedside with a cluster of beautiful violets, a letter, and several daintily made morocco cases. When these were opened there leaped out strings and necklaces of exquisite diamonds, blazing in the morning sunlight. Mme. Walewska seized the jewels and flung them across the room with an order that they

should be taken back at once to the imperial giver; but the letter, which was in the same romantic strain as the others, she retained.

On that same evening there was another dinner, given to the emperor by the nobles, and Marie Walewska attended it, but of course without the diamonds, which she had returned. Nor did she wear the flowers which had accompanied the diamonds.

When Napoleon met her he frowned upon her and made her tremble with the cold glances that shot from his eyes of steel. He scarcely spoke to her throughout the meal, but those who sat beside her were earnest in their pleading.

Again she waited until the guests had gone away, and with a lighter heart, since she felt that she had nothing to fear. But when she met Napoleon in his private cabinet, alone, his mood was very different from that which he had shown before. Instead of gentleness and consideration he was the Napoleon of camps, and not of courts. He greeted her bruskly.

"I scarcely expected to see you again," said he. "Why did you refuse my diamonds and my flowers? Why did you avoid my eyes at dinner? Your coldness is an insult which I shall

not brook." Then he raised his voice to that rasping, almost blood-curdling tone which even his hardiest soldiers dreaded: "I will have you know that I mean to conquer you. You *shall*—yes, I repeat it, you *shall* love me! I have restored the name of your country. It owes its very existence to me."

Then he resorted to a trick which he had played years before in dealing with the Austrians at Campo Formio.

"See this watch which I am holding in my hand. Just as I dash it to fragments before you, so will I shatter Poland if you drive me to desperation by rejecting my heart and refusing me your own."

As he spoke he hurled the watch against the opposite wall with terrific force, dashing it to pieces. In terror, Mme. Walewska fainted. When she resumed consciousness there was Napoleon wiping away her tears with the tenderness of a woman and with words of self-reproach.

The long siege was over. Napoleon had conquered, and this girl of eighteen gave herself up to his caresses and endearments, thinking that, after all, her love of country was more than her own honor.

Her husband, as a matter of form, put her away from him, though at heart he approved what she had done, while the Polish people regarded her as nothing less than a national heroine. To them she was no minister to the vices of an emperor, but rather one who would make him love Poland for her sake and restore its greatness.

So far as concerned his love for her, it was, indeed, almost idolatry. He honored her in every way and spent all the time at his disposal in her company. But his promise to restore Poland he never kept, and gradually she found that he had never meant to keep it.

"I love your country," he would say, "and I am willing to aid in the attempt to uphold its rights, but my first duty is to France. I cannot shed French blood in a foreign cause."

By this time, however, Marie Walewska had learned to love Napoleon for his own sake. She could not resist his ardor, which matched the ardor of the Poles themselves. Moreover, it flattered her to see the greatest soldier in the world a suppliant for her smiles.

For some years she was Napoleon's close companion, spending long hours with him and finally accompanying him to Paris. She was

the mother of Napoleon's only son who lived to manhood. This son, who bore the name of Alexandre Florian de Walewski, was born in Poland in 1810, and later was created a count and duke of the second French Empire. It may be said parenthetically that he was a man of great ability. Living down to 1868, he was made much of by Napoleon III., who placed him in high offices of state, which he filled with distinction. In contrast with the Duc de Morny, who was Napoleon's illegitimate half-brother, Alexandre de Walewski stood out in brilliant contrast. He would have nothing to do with stock-jobbing and unseemly speculation.

"I may be poor," he said—though he was not poor—"but at least I remember the glory of my father and what is due to his great name."

As for Mme. Walewska, she was loyal to the emperor, and lacked the greed of many women whom he had made his favorites. Even at Elba, when he was in exile and disgrace, she visited him that she might endeavor to console him. She was his counselor and friend as well as his earnestly loved mate. When she died in Paris in 1817, while the dethroned emperor was a prisoner at St. Helena, the word "Napoleon" was the last upon her lips.

THE STORY OF PAULINE BONAPARTE

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IT was said of Napoleon long ago that he could govern emperors and kings, but that not even he could rule his relatives. He himself once declared:

"My family have done me far more harm than I have been able to do them good."

It would be an interesting historical study to determine just how far the great soldier's family aided in his downfall by their selfishness, their jealousy, their meanness, and their ingratitude.

There is something piquant in thinking of Napoleon as a domestic sort of person. Indeed, it is rather difficult to do so. When we speak his name we think of the stern warrior hurling his armies up bloody slopes and on to bloody victory. He is the man whose steely eyes made his haughtiest marshals tremble, or else the wise, far-seeing statesman and lawgiver; but decidedly he is not a household model. We read of his sharp speech to women, of his outrageous manners at the dinner-table, and of

the thousand and one details which Mme. de Rémusat has chronicled—and perhaps in part invented, for there has always existed the suspicion that her animus was that of a woman who had herself sought the imperial favor and had failed to win it.

But, in fact, all these stories relate to the Napoleon of courts and palaces, and not to the Napoleon of home. In his private life this great man was not merely affectionate and indulgent, but he even showed a certain weakness where his relatives were concerned, so that he let them prey upon him almost without end.

He had a great deal of the Italian largeness and lavishness of character with his family. When a petty officer he nearly starved himself in order to give his younger brother, Louis, a military education. He was devotedly fond of children, and they were fond of him, as many anecdotes attest. His passionate love for Josephine before he learned of her infidelity is almost painful to read of; and even afterward, when he had been disillusioned, and when she was paying Fouché a thousand francs a day to spy upon Napoleon's every action, he still treated her with friendliness and allowed her extravagance to embarrass him.

He made his eldest brother, Joseph, King of Spain, and Spain proved almost as deadly to him as did Russia. He made his youngest brother, Jerome, King of Westphalia, and Jerome turned the palace into a pigsty and brought discredit on the very name of Bonaparte. His brother Louis, for whom he had starved himself, he placed upon the throne of Holland, and Louis promptly devoted himself to his own interests, conniving at many things which were inimical to France. He was planning high advancement for his brother Lucien, and Lucien suddenly married a disreputable actress and fled with her to England, where he was received with pleasure by the most persistent of all Napoleon's enemies.

So much for his brothers—incompetent, ungrateful, or openly his foes. But his three sisters were no less remarkable in the relations which they bore to him. They have been styled "the three crowned courtesans," and they have been condemned together as being utterly void of principle and monsters of ingratitude.

Much of this censure was well deserved by all of them—by Caroline and Elise and Pauline. But when we look at the facts impartially we shall find something which makes Pauline stand

out alone as infinitely superior to her sisters. Of all the Bonapartes she was the only one who showed fidelity and gratitude to the great emperor, her brother. Even Mme. Mère, Napoleon's mother, who beyond all question transmitted to him his great mental and physical power, did nothing for him. At the height of his splendor she hoarded sous and francs and grumblingly remarked:

"All this is for a time. It isn't going to last!"

Pauline, however, was in one respect different from all her kindred. Napoleon made Elise a princess in her own right and gave her the Grand Duchy of Tuscany. He married Caroline to Marshal Murat, and they became respectively King and Queen of Naples. For Pauline he did very little—less, in fact, than for any other member of his family—and yet she alone stood by him to the end.

This feather-headed, languishing, beautiful, distracting morsel of frivolity, who had the manners of a kitten and the morals of a cat, nevertheless was not wholly unworthy to be Napoleon's sister. One has to tell many hard things of her; and yet one almost pardons her because of her underlying devotion to the man

who made the name of Bonaparte illustrious for ever. Caroline, Queen of Naples, urged her husband to turn against his former chief. Elise, sour and greedy, threw in her fortunes with the Murats. Pauline, as we shall see, had the one redeeming trait of gratitude.

To those who knew her she was from girlhood an incarnation of what used to be called "femininity." We have to-day another and a higher definition of womanhood, but to her contemporaries, and to many modern writers, she has seemed to be first of all woman—"woman to the tips of her rosy finger-nails," says Lévy. Those who saw her were distracted by her loveliness. They say that no one can form any idea of her beauty from her pictures. "A veritable masterpiece of creation," she had been called. Frédéric Masson declares:

> She was so much more the typical woman that with her the defects common to women reached their highest development, while her beauty attained a perfection which may justly be called unique.

No one speaks of Pauline Bonaparte's character or of her intellect, but wholly of her loveliness and charm, and, it must be added, of her utter lack of anything like a moral sense.

Even as a child of thirteen, when the Bonapartes left Corsica and took up their abode in Marseilles, she attracted universal attention by her wonderful eyes, her grace, and also by the utter lack of decorum which she showed. The Bonaparte girls at this time lived almost on charity. The future emperor was then a captain of artillery and could give them but little out of his scanty pay.

Pauline—or, as they called her in those days, Paulette—wore unbecoming hats and shabby gowns, and shoes that were full of holes. None the less, she was sought out by several men of note, among them Fréron, a commissioner of the Convention. He visited Pauline so often as to cause unfavorable comment; but he was in love with her, and she fell in love with him to the extent of her capacity. She used to write him love letters in Italian, which were certainly not lacking in ardor. Here is the end of one of them:

> I love you always and most passionately. I love you for ever, my beautiful idol, my heart, my appealing lover. I love you, love you, love you, the most loved of lovers, and I swear never to love any one else!

This was interesting in view of the fact that soon afterward she fell in love with Junot, who

became a famous marshal. But her love affairs never gave her any serious trouble; and the three sisters, who now began to feel the influence of Napoleon's rise to power, enjoyed themselves as they had never done before. At Antibes they had a beautiful villa, and later a mansion at Milan.

By this time Napoleon had routed the Austrians in Italy, and all France was ringing with his name. What was Pauline like in her maidenhood? Arnault says:

> She was an extraordinary combination of perfect physical beauty and the strangest moral laxity. She was as pretty as you please, but utterly unreasonable. She had no more manners than a school-girl—talking incoherently, giggling at everything and nothing, and mimicking the most serious persons of rank.

General de Ricard, who knew her then, tells in his monograph of the private theatricals in which Pauline took part, and of the sport which they had behind the scenes. He says:

> The Bonaparte girls used literally to dress us. They pulled our ears and slapped us, but they always kissed and made up later. We used to stay in the girls' room all the time when they were dressing.

Napoleon was anxious to see his sisters in some way settled. He proposed to General

Marmont to marry Pauline. The girl was then only seventeen, and one might have had some faith in her character. But Marmont was shrewd and knew her far too well. The words in which he declined the honor are interesting:

"I know that she is charming and exquisitely beautiful; yet I have dreams of domestic happiness, of fidelity, and of virtue. Such dreams are seldom realized, I know. Still, in the hope of winning them—"

And then he paused, coughed, and completed what he had to say in a sort of mumble, but his meaning was wholly clear. He would not accept the offer of Pauline in marriage, even though she was the sister of his mighty chief.

Then Napoleon turned to General Leclerc, with whom Pauline had for some time flirted, as she had flirted with almost all the officers of Napoleon's staff. Leclerc was only twenty-six. He was rich and of good manners, but rather serious and in poor health. This was not precisely the sort of husband for Pauline, if we look at it in the conventional way; but it served Napoleon's purpose and did not in the least interfere with his sister's intrigues.

Poor Leclerc, who really loved Pauline, grew thin, and graver still in manner. He was sent

to Spain and Portugal, and finally was made commander-in-chief of the French expedition to Haiti, where the famous black rebel, Toussaint l'Ouverture, was heading an uprising of the negroes.

Napoleon ordered Pauline to accompany her husband. Pauline flatly refused, although she made this an occasion for ordering "mountains of pretty clothes and pyramids of hats." But still she refused to go on board the flag-ship. Leclerc expostulated and pleaded, but the lovely witch laughed in his face and still persisted that she would never go.

Word was brought to Napoleon. He made short work of her resistance.

"Bring a litter," he said, with one of his steely glances. "Order six grenadiers to thrust her into it, and see that she goes on board forthwith."

And so, screeching like an angry cat, she was carried on board, and set sail with her husband and one of her former lovers. She found Haiti and Santo Domingo more agreeable than she had supposed. She was there a sort of queen who could do as she pleased and have her orders implicitly obeyed. Her dissipation was

something frightful Her folly and her vanity were beyond belief.

But at the end of two years both she and her husband fell ill. He was stricken down by the yellow fever, which was decimating the French army. Pauline was suffering from the results of her life in a tropical climate. Leclerc died, the expedition was abandoned, and Pauline brought the general's body back to France. When he was buried she, still recovering from her fever, had him interred in a costly coffin and paid him the tribute of cutting off her beautiful hair and burying it with him.

"What a touching tribute to her dead husband!" said some one to Napoleon.

The emperor smiled cynically as he remarked:

"H'm! Of course she knows that her hair is bound to fall out after her fever, and that it will come in longer and thicker for being cropped."

Napoleon, in fact, though he loved Pauline better than his other sisters—or perhaps because he loved her better—was very strict with her. He obliged her to wear mourning, and to observe some of the proprieties; but it was hard to keep her within bounds.

Presently it became noised about that Prince Camillo Borghese was exceedingly intimate with her. The prince was an excellent specimen of the fashionable Italian. He was immensely rich. His palace at Rome was crammed with pictures, statues, and every sort of artistic treasure. He was the owner, moreover, of the famous Borghese jewels, the finest collection of diamonds in the world.

Napoleon rather sternly insisted upon her marrying Borghese. Fortunately, the prince was very willing to be connected with Napoleon; while Pauline was delighted at the idea of having diamonds that would eclipse all the gems which Josephine possessed; for, like all of the Bonapartes, she detested her brother's wife. So she would be married and show her diamonds to Josephine. It was a bit of feminine malice which she could not resist.

The marriage took place very quietly at Joseph Bonaparte's house, because of the absence of Napoleon; but the newly made princess was invited to visit Josephine at the palace of Saint-Cloud. Here was to be the triumph of her life. She spent many days in planning a toilet that should be absolutely crushing to Josephine. Whatever she wore must be a background for

the famous diamonds. Finally she decided on green velvet.

When the day came Pauline stood before a mirror and gazed at herself with diamonds glistening in her hair, shimmering around her neck, and fastened so thickly on her green velvet gown as to remind one of a moving jewel-casket. She actually shed tears for joy. Then she entered her carriage and drove out to Saint-Cloud.

But the creole Josephine, though no longer young, was a woman of great subtlety as well as charm. Stories had been told to her of the green velvet, and therefore she had her drawing-room redecorated in the most uncompromising blue. It killed the green velvet completely. As for the diamonds, she met that maneuver by wearing not a single gem of any kind. Her dress was an Indian muslin with a broad hem of gold.

Her exquisite simplicity, coupled with her dignity of bearing, made the Princess Pauline, with her shower of diamonds, and her green velvet displayed against the blue, seem absolutely vulgar. Josephine was most generous in her admiration of the Borghese gems, and she kissed Pauline on parting. The victory was hers.

There is another story of a defeat which Pauline met from another lady, one Mme. de Coutades. This was at a magnificent ball given to the most fashionable world of Paris. Pauline decided upon going, and intended, in her own phrase, to blot out every woman there. She kept the secret of her toilet absolutely, and she entered the ballroom at the psychological moment, when all the guests had just assembled.

She appeared; and at sight of her the music stopped, silence fell upon the assemblage, and a sort of quiver went through every one. Her costume was of the finest muslin bordered with golden palm-leaves. Four bands, spotted like a leopard's skin, were wound about her head, while these in turn were supported by little clusters of golden grapes. She had copied the head-dress of a Bacchante in the Louvre. All over her person were cameos, and just beneath her breasts she wore a golden band held in place by an engraved gem. Her beautiful wrists, arms, and hands were bare. She had, in fact, blotted out her rivals.

Nevertheless, Mme. de Coutades took her revenge. She went up to Pauline, who was lying on a divan to set off her loveliness, and began gazing at the princess through a double eye-

glass. Pauline felt flattered for a moment, and then became uneasy. The lady who was looking at her said to a companion, in a tone of compassion:

"What a pity! She really would be lovely if it weren't for *that!*"

"For what?" returned her escort.

"Why, are you blind? It's so remarkable that you *surely* must see it."

Pauline was beginning to lose her self-composure. She flushed and looked wildly about, wondering what was meant. Then she heard Mme. Coutades say:

"Why, her ears. If I had such ears as those I would cut them off!"

Pauline gave one great gasp and fainted dead away. As a matter of fact, her ears were not so bad. They were simply very flat and colorless, forming a contrast with the rosy tints of her face. But from that moment no one could see anything but these ears; and thereafter the princess wore her hair low enough to cover them.

This may be seen in the statue of her by Canova. It was considered a very daring thing for her to pose for him in the nude, for only a bit of drapery is thrown over her lower limbs.

Yet it is true that this statue is absolutely classical in its conception and execution, and its interest is heightened by the fact that its model was what she afterward styled herself, with true Napoleonic pride—"a sister of Bonaparte."

Pauline detested Josephine and was pleased when Napoleon divorced her; but she also disliked the Austrian archduchess, Marie Louise, who was Josephine's successor. On one occasion, at a great court function, she got behind the empress and ran out her tongue at her, in full view of all the nobles and distinguished persons present. Napoleon's eagle eye flashed upon Pauline and blazed like fire upon ice. She actually took to her heels, rushed out of the ball, and never visited the court again.

It would require much time to tell of her other eccentricities, of her intrigues, which were innumerable, of her quarrel with her husband, and of the minor breaches of decorum with which she startled Paris. One of these was her choice of a huge negro to bathe her every morning. When some one ventured to protest, she answered, naïvely:

"What? Do you call that thing a *man?*"

And she compromised by compelling her

black servitor to go out and marry some one at once, so that he might continue his ministrations with propriety!

To her Napoleon showed himself far more severe than with either Caroline or Elise. He gave her a marriage dowry of half a million francs when she became the Princess Borghese, but after that he was continually checking her extravagances. Yet in 1814, when the downfall came and Napoleon was sent into exile at Elba, Pauline was the only one of all his relatives to visit him and spend her time with him. His wife fell away and went back to her Austrian relatives. Of all the Bonapartes only Pauline and Mme. Mère remained faithful to the emperor.

Even then Napoleon refused to pay a bill of hers for sixty-two francs, while he allowed her only two hundred and forty francs for the maintenance of her horses. But she, with a generosity of which one would have thought her quite incapable, gave to her brother a great part of her fortune. When he escaped from Elba and began the campaign of 1815 she presented him with all the Borghese diamonds. In fact, he had them with him in his carriage at Waterloo, where they were captured by the English.

Contrast this with the meanness and ingratitude of her sisters and her brothers, and one may well believe that she was sincerely proud of what it meant to be *la sœur de Bonaparte.*

When he was sent to St. Helena she was ill in bed and could not accompany him. Nevertheless, she tried to sell all her trinkets, of which she was so proud, in order that she might give him help. When he died she received the news with bitter tears "on hearing all the particulars of that long agony."

As for herself, she did not long survive. At the age of forty-four her last moments came. Knowing that she was to die, she sent for Prince Borghese and sought a reconciliation. But, after all, she died as she had lived—"the queen of trinkets" (*la reine des colifichets*). She asked the servant to bring a mirror. She gazed into it with her dying eyes; and then, as she sank back, it was with a smile of deep content.

"I am not afraid to die," she said. "I am still beautiful!"

THE STORY OF THE EMPRESS MARIE LOUISE AND COUNT NEIPPERG

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THERE is one famous woman whom history condems while at the same time it partly hides the facts which might mitigate the harshness of the judgment that is passed upon her. This woman is Marie Louise, Empress of France, consort of the great Napoleon, and archduchess of imperial Austria. When the most brilliant figure in all history, after his overthrow in 1814, was in tawdry exile on the petty island of Elba, the empress was already about to become a mother; and the father of her unborn child was not Napoleon, but another man. This is almost all that is usually remembered of her—that she was unfaithful to Napoleon, that she abandoned him in the hour of his defeat, and that she gave herself with readiness to one inferior in rank, yet with whom she lived for years, and to whom she bore what a French writer styled "a brood of bastards."

Naturally enough, the Austrian and German historians do not have much to say of Marie

Louise, because in her own disgrace she also brought disgrace upon the proudest reigning family in Europe. Naturally, also, French writers, even those who are hostile to Napoleon, do not care to dwell upon the story; since France itself was humiliated when its greatest genius and most splendid soldier was deceived by his Austrian wife. Therefore there are still many who know little beyond the bare fact that the Empress Marie Louise threw away her pride as a princess, her reputation as a wife, and her honor as a woman. Her figure seems to crouch in a sort of murky byway, and those who pass over the highroad of history ignore it with averted eyes.

In reality the story of Napoleon and Marie Louise and of the Count von Neipperg is one which, when you search it to the very core, leads you straight to a sex problem of a very curious nature. Nowhere else does it occur in the relations of the great personages of history; but in literature Balzac, that master of psychology, has touched upon the theme in the early chapters of his famous novel called *A Woman of Thirty.*

As to the Napoleonic story, let us first recall the facts of the case, giving them in such

order that their full significance may be understood.

In 1809 Napoleon, then at the plenitude of his power, shook himself free from the clinging clasp of Josephine and procured the annulment of his marriage to her. He really owed her nothing. Before he knew her she had been the mistress of another. In the first years of their life together she had been notoriously unfaithful to him. He had held to her from habit which was in part a superstition; but the remembrance of the wrong which she had done him made her faded charms at times almost repulsive. And then Josephine had never borne him any children; and without a son to perpetuate his dynasty, the gigantic achievements which he had wrought seemed futile in his eyes, and likely to crumble into nothingness when he should die.

No sooner had the marriage been annulled than his titanic ambition leaped, as it always did, to a tremendous pinnacle. He would wed. He would have children. But he would wed no petty princess. This man who in his early youth had felt honored by a marriage with the almost *déclassée* widow of a creole planter now stretched out his hand that he might take to himself a woman not merely royal but imperial.

At first he sought the sister of the Czar of Russia; but Alexander entertained a profound distrust of the French emperor, and managed to evade the tentative demand. There was, however, a reigning family far more ancient than the Romanoffs—a family which had held the imperial dignity for nearly six centuries—the oldest and the noblest blood in Europe. This was the Austrian house of Hapsburg. Its head, the Emperor Francis, had thirteen children, of whom the eldest, the Archduchess Marie Louise, was then in her nineteenth year.

Napoleon had resented the rebuff which the Czar had given him. He turned, therefore, the more eagerly to the other project. Yet there were many reasons why an Austrian marriage might be dangerous, or, at any rate, ill-omened. Only sixteen years before, an Austrian archduchess, Marie Antionette, married to the ruler of France, had met her death upon the scaffold, hated and cursed by the French people, who had always blamed "the Austrian" for the evil days which had ended in the flames of revolution. Again, the father of the girl to whom Napoleon's fancy turned had been the bitter enemy of the new régime in France. His troops had been beaten by the French in five wars and had

been crushed at Austerlitz and at Wagram. Bonaparte had twice entered Vienna at the head of a conquering army, and thrice he had slept in the imperial palace at Schönbrunn, while Francis was fleeing through the dark, a beaten fugitive pursued by the swift squadrons of French cavalry.

The feeling of Francis of Austria was not merely that of the vanquished toward the victor. It was a deep hatred almost religious in its fervor. He was the head and front of the old-time feudalism of birth and blood; Napoleon was the incarnation of the modern spirit which demolished thrones and set an iron heel upon crowned heads, giving the sacred titles of king and prince to soldiers who, even in palaces, still showed the swaggering brutality of the camp and the stable whence they sprang. Yet, just because an alliance with the Austrian house seemed in so many ways impossible, the thought of it inflamed the ardor of Napoleon all the more.

"Impossible?" he had once said, contemptuously. "The word 'impossible' is not French."

The Austrian alliance, unnatural though it seemed, was certainly quite possible. In the year 1809 Napoleon had finished his fifth war

with Austria by the terrific battle of Wagram, which brought the empire of the Hapsburgs to the very dust. The conqueror's rude hand had stripped from Francis province after province. He had even let fall hints that the Hapsburgs might be dethroned and that Austria might disappear from the map of Europe, to be divided between himself and the Russian Czar, who was still his ally. It was at this psychological moment that the Czar wounded Napoleon's pride by refusing to give the hand of his sister Anne.

The subtle diplomats of Vienna immediately saw their chance. Prince Metternich, with the caution of one who enters the cage of a man-eating tiger, suggested that the Austrian archduchess would be a fitting bride for the French conqueror. The notion soothed the wounded vanity of Napoleon. From that moment events moved swiftly; and before long it was understood that there was to be a new empress in France, and that she was to be none other than the daughter of the man who had been Napoleon's most persistent foe upon the Continent. The girl was to be given—sacrificed, if you like—to appease an imperial adventurer. After such a marriage, Austria would be safe from

spoliation. The reigning dynasty would remain firmly seated upon its historic throne.

But how about the girl herself? She had always heard Napoleon spoken of as a sort of ogre—a man of low ancestry, a brutal and faithless enemy of her people. She knew that this bold, rough-spoken soldier less than a year before had added insult to the injury which he had inflicted on her father. In public proclamations he had called the Emperor Francis a coward and a liar. Up to the latter part of the year Napoleon was to her imagination a blood-stained, sordid, and yet all-powerful monster, outside the pale of human liking and respect. What must have been her thoughts when her father first told her with averted face that she was to become the bride of such a being?

Marie Louise had been brought up, as all German girls of rank were then brought up, in quiet simplicity and utter innocence. In person she was a tall blonde, with a wealth of light brown hair tumbling about a face which might be called attractive because it was so youthful and so gentle, but in which only poets and courtiers could see beauty. Her complexion was rosy, with that peculiar tinge which means that in the course of time it will become red and mottled.

Her blue eyes were clear and childish. Her figure was good, though already too full for a girl who was younger than her years.

She had a large and generous mouth with full lips, the lower one being the true "Hapsburg lip," slightly pendulous—a feature which has remained for generation after generation as a sure sign of Hapsburg blood. One sees it in the present emperor of Austria, in the late Queen Regent of Spain, and in the present King of Spain, Alfonso. All the artists who made miniatures or paintings of Marie Louise softened down this racial mark so that no likeness of her shows it as it really was. But take her all in all, she was a simple, childlike, German *mädchen* who knew nothing of the outside world except what she had heard from her discreet and watchful governess, and what had been told her of Napoleon by her uncles, the archdukes whom he had beaten down in battle.

When she learned that she was to be given to the French emperor her girlish soul experienced a shudder; but her father told her how vital was this union to her country and to him. With a sort of piteous dread she questioned the archdukes who had called Napoleon an ogre.

"Oh, that was when Napoleon was an enemy," they replied. "Now he is our friend."

Marie Louise listened to all this, and, like the obedient German girl she was, yielded her own will.

Events moved with a rush, for Napoleon was not the man to dally. Josephine had retired to her residence at Malmaison, and Paris was already astir with preparations for the new empress who was to assure the continuation of the Napoleonic glory by giving children to her husband. Napoleon had said to his ambassador with his usual bluntness:

"This is the first and most important thing—she must have children."

To the girl whom he was to marry he sent the following letter—an odd letter, combining the formality of a negotiator with the veiled ardor of a lover:

My Cousin:

The brilliant qualities which adorn your person have inspired in me a desire to serve you and to pay you homage. In making my request to the emperor, your father, and praying him to intrust to me the happiness of your imperial highness, may I hope that you will understand the sentiments which lead me to this act? May I flatter myself that it will not be decided solely by the duty of parental obedience? However

slightly the feelings of your imperial highness may incline to me, I wish to cultivate them with so great care, and to endeavor so constantly to please you in everything, that I flatter myself that some day I shall prove attractive to you. This is the end at which I desire to arrive, and for which I pray your highness to be favorable to me.

Immediately everything was done to dazzle the imagination of the girl. She had dressed always in the simplicity of the school-room. Her only ornaments had been a few colored stones which she sometimes wore as a necklace or a bracelet. Now the resources of all France were drawn upon. Precious laces foamed about her. Cascades of diamonds flashed before her eyes. The costliest and most exquisite creations of the Parisian shops were spread around her to make up a trousseau fit for the princess who was soon to become the bride of the man who had mastered continental Europe.

The archives of Vienna were ransacked for musty documents which would show exactly what had been done for other Austrian princesses who had married rulers of France. Everything was duplicated down to the last detail. Ladies-in-waiting thronged about the young archduchess; and presently there came to her Queen Caroline of Naples, Napoleon's

sister, of whom Napoleon himself once said: "She is the only man among my sisters, as Joseph is the only woman among my brothers." Caroline, by virtue of her rank as queen, could have free access to her husband's future bride. Also, there came presently Napoleon's famous marshal, Berthier, Prince of Neuchâtel, the chief of the Old Guard, who had just been created Prince of Wagram—a title which, very naturally, he did not use in Austria. He was to act as proxy for Napoleon in the preliminary marriage service at Vienna.

All was excitement. Vienna had never been so gay. Money was lavished under the direction of Caroline and Berthier. There were illuminations and balls. The young girl found herself the center of the world's interest; and the excitement made her dizzy. She could not but be flattered, and yet there were many hours when her heart misgave her. More than once she was found in tears. Her father, an affectionate though narrow soul, spent an entire day with her consoling and reassuring her. One thought she always kept in mind—what she had said to Metternich at the very first:

"I want only what my duty bids me want."

At last came the official marriage, by proxy,

in the presence of a splendid gathering. The various documents were signed, the dowry was arranged for. Gifts were scattered right and left. At the opera there were gala performances. Then Marie Louise bade her father a sad farewell. Almost suffocated by sobs and with her eyes streaming with tears, she was led between two hedges of bayonets to her carriage, while cannon thundered and all the church-bells of Vienna rang a joyful peal.

She set out for France accompanied by a long train of carriages filled with noblemen and noblewomen, with ladies-in-waiting and scores of attendant menials. The young bride—the wife of a man whom she had never seen—was almost dead with excitement and fatigue. At a station in the outskirts of Vienna she scribbled a few lines to her father, which are a commentary upon her state of mind:

> I think of you always, and I always shall. God has given me power to endure this final shock, and in Him alone I have put all my trust. He will help me and give me courage, and I shall find support in doing my duty toward you, since it is all for you that I have sacrificed myself.

There is something piteous in this little note of a frightened girl going to encounter she

knew not what, and clinging almost frantically to the one thought—that whatever might befall her, she was doing as her father wished.

One need not recount the long and tedious journey of many days over wretched roads, in carriages that jolted and lurched and swayed. She was surrounded by unfamiliar faces and was compelled to meet at every town the chief men of the place, all of whom paid her honor, but stared at her with irrepressible curiosity. Day after day she went on and on. Each morning a courier on a foaming horse presented her with a great cluster of fresh flowers and a few lines scrawled by the unknown husband who was to meet her at her journey's end.

There lay the point upon which her wandering thoughts were focused—the journey's end! The man whose strange, mysterious power had forced her from her school-room, had driven her through a nightmare of strange happenings, and who was waiting for her somewhere to take her to himself, to master her as he had mastered generals and armies!

What was marriage? What did it mean? What experience still lay before her? These were the questions which she must have asked herself throughout that long, exhausting jour-

ney. When she thought of the past she was homesick. When she thought of the immediate future she was fearful with a shuddering fear.

At last she reached the frontier of France, and her carriage passed into a sort of triple structure, the first pavilion of which was Austrian, while the middle pavilion was neutral, and the farther one was French. Here she was received by those who were afterward to surround her—the representatives of the Napoleonic court. They were not all plebeians and children of the Revolution, ex-stable boys, ex-laundresses. By this time Napoleon had gathered around himself some of the noblest families of France, who had rallied to the empire. The assemblage was a brilliant one. There were Montmorencys and Beaumonts and Audenardes in abundance. But to Marie Louise, as to her Austrian attendants, they were all alike. They were French, they were strangers, and she shrank from them.

Yet here her Austrians must leave her. All who had accompanied her thus far were now turned back. Napoleon had been insistent on this point. Even her governess, who had been with her since her childhood, was not allowed to cross the French frontier. So fixed was Na-

poleon's purpose to have nothing Austrian about her, that even her pet dog, to which she clung as a girl would cling, was taken from her. Thereafter she was surrounded only by French faces, by French guards, and was greeted only by salvos of French artillery.

In the mean time what was Napoleon doing at Paris? Since the annulment of his marriage with Josephine he had gone into a sort of retirement. Matters of state, war, internal reforms, no longer interested him; but that restless brain could not sink into repose. Inflamed with the ardor of a new passion, that passion was all the greater because he had never yet set eyes upon its object. Marriage with an imperial princess flattered his ambition. The youth and innocence of the bride stirred his whole being with a thrill of novelty. The painted charms of Josephine, the mercenary favors of actresses, the calculated ecstasies of the women of the court who gave themselves to him from vanity, had long since palled upon him. Therefore the impatience with which he awaited the coming of Marie Louise became every day more tense.

For a time he amused himself with planning down to the very last details the demonstra-

tions that were to be given in her honor. He organized them as minutely as he had ever organized a conquering army. He showed himself as wonderful in these petty things as he had in those great strategic combinations which had baffled the ablest generals of Europe. But after all had been arranged—even to the illuminations, the cheering, the salutes, and the etiquette of the court—he fell into a fever of impatience which gave him sleepless nights and frantic days. He paced up and down the Tuileries, almost beside himself. He hurried off courier after courier with orders that the postilions should lash their horses to bring the hour of meeting nearer still. He scribbled love letters. He gazed continually on the diamond-studded portrait of the woman who was hurrying toward him.

At last as the time approached he entered a swift traveling-carriage and hastened to Compiègne, about fifty miles from Paris, where it had been arranged that he should meet his consort and whence he was to escort her to the capital, so that they might be married in the great gallery of the Louvre. At Compiègne the chancellerie had been set apart for Napoleon's convenience, while the château had been as-

signed to Marie Louise and her attendants. When Napoleon's carriage dashed into the place, drawn by horses that had traveled at a gallop, the emperor could not restrain himself. It was raining torrents and night was coming on, yet, none the less, he shouted for fresh horses and pushed on to Soissons, where the new empress was to stop and dine. When he reached there and she had not arrived, new relays of horses were demanded, and he hurried off once more into the dark.

At the little village of Courcelles he met the courier who was riding in advance of the empress's cortège.

"She will be here in a few moments!" cried Napoleon; and he leaped from his carriage into the highway.

The rain descended harder than ever, and he took refuge in the arched doorway of the village church, his boots already bemired, his greatcoat reeking with the downpour. As he crouched before the church he heard the sound of carriages; and before long there came toiling through the mud the one in which was seated the girl for whom he had so long been waiting. It was stopped at an order given by an officer. Within it, half-fainting with

fatigue and fear, Marie Louise sat in the dark, alone.

Here, if ever, was the chance for Napoleon to win his bride. Could he have restrained himself, could he have shown the delicate consideration which was demanded of him, could he have remembered at least that he was an emperor and that the girl—timid and shuddering—was a princess, her future story might have been far different. But long ago he had ceased to think of anything except his own desires.

He approached the carriage. An obsequious chamberlain drew aside the leathern covering and opened the door, exclaiming as he did so, "The emperor!" And then there leaped in the rain-soaked, mud-bespattered being whose excesses had always been as unbridled as his genius. The door was closed, the leathern curtain again drawn, and the horses set out at a gallop for Soissons. Within, the shrinking bride was at the mercy of pure animal passion, feeling upon her hot face a torrent of rough kisses, and yielding herself in terror to the caresses of wanton hands.

At Soissons Napoleon allowed no halt, but the carriage plunged on, still in the rain, to Compiègne. There all the arrangements made

with so much care were thrust aside. Though the actual marriage had not yet taken place, Napoleon claimed all the rights which afterward were given in the ceremonial at Paris. He took the girl to the chancellerie, and not to the château. In an anteroom dinner was served with haste to the imperial pair and Queen Caroline. Then the latter was dismissed with little ceremony, the lights were extinguished, and this daughter of a line of emperors was left to the tender mercies of one who always had about him something of the common soldier—the man who lives for loot and lust. . . . At eleven the next morning she was unable to rise and was served in bed by the ladies of her household.

These facts, repellent as they are, must be remembered when we call to mind what happened in the next five years. The horror of that night could not be obliterated by splendid ceremonies, by studious attention, or by all the pomp and gaiety of the court. Napoleon was then forty-one—practically the same age as his new wife's father, the Austrian emperor; Marie Louise was barely nineteen and younger than her years. Her master must have seemed to be the brutal ogre whom her uncles had described.

Installed in the Tuileries, she taught herself

compliance. On their marriage night Napoleon had asked her briefly: "What did your parents tell you?" And she had answered, meekly: "To be yours altogether and to obey you in everything." But, though she gave compliance, and though her freshness seemed enchanting to Napoleon, there was something concealed within her thoughts to which he could not penetrate. He gaily said to a member of the court:

"Marry a German, my dear fellow. They are the best women in the world—gentle, good, artless, and as fresh as roses."

Yet, at the same time, Napoleon felt a deep anxiety lest in her very heart of hearts this German girl might either fear or hate him secretly. Somewhat later Prince Metternich came from the Austrian court to Paris.

"I give you leave," said Napoleon, "to have a private interview with the empress. Let her tell you what she likes, and I shall ask no questions. Even should I do so, I now forbid your answering me."

Metternich was closeted with the empress for a long while. When he returned to the anteroom he found Napoleon fidgeting about, his eyes a pair of interrogation-points.

"I am sure," he said, "that the empress told you that I was kind to her?"

Metternich bowed and made no answer.

"Well," said Napoleon, somewhat impatiently, "at least I am sure that she is happy. Tell me, did she not say so?"

The Austrian diplomat remained unsmiling.

"Your majesty himself has forbidden me to answer," he returned with another bow.

We may fairly draw the inference that Marie Louise, though she adapted herself to her surroundings, was never really happy. Napoleon became infatuated with her. He surrounded her with every possible mark of honor. He abandoned public business to walk or drive with her. But the memory of his own brutality must have vaguely haunted him throughout it all. He was jealous of her as he had never been jealous of the fickle Josephine. Constant has recorded that the greatest precautions were taken to prevent any person whatsoever, and especially any man, from approaching the empress save in the presence of witnesses.

Napoleon himself underwent a complete change of habits and demeanor. Where he had been rough and coarse he became attentive and refined. His shabby uniforms were all dis-

carded, and he spent hours in trying on new costumes. He even attempted to learn to waltz, but this he gave up in despair. Whereas before he ate hastily and at irregular intervals, he now sat at dinner with unusual patience, and the court took on a character which it had never had. Never before had he sacrificed either his public duty or his private pleasure for any woman. Even in the first ardor of his marriage with Josephine, when he used to pour out his heart to her in letters from Italian battle-fields, he did so only after he had made the disposition of his troops and had planned his movements for the following day. Now, however, he was not merely devoted, but uxorious; and in 1811, after the birth of the little King of Rome, he ceased to be the earlier Napoleon altogether. He had founded a dynasty. He was the head of a reigning house. He forgot the principles of the Revolution, and he ruled, as he thought, like other monarchs, by the grace of God.

As for Marie Louise, she played her part extremely well. Somewhat haughty and unapproachable to others, she nevertheless studied Napoleon's every wish. She seemed even to be loving; but one can scarcely doubt that her obedience sprang ultimately from fear and that her

devotion was the devotion of a dog which has been beaten into subjection.

Her vanity was flattered in many ways, and most of all by her appointment as regent of the empire during Napoleon's absence in the disastrous Russian campaign which began in 1812. It was in June of that year that the French emperor held court at Dresden, where he played, as was said, to "a parterre of kings." This was the climax of his magnificence, for there were gathered all the sovereigns and princes who were his allies and who furnished the levies that swelled his Grand Army to six hundred thousand men. Here Marie Louise, like her husband, felt to the full the intoxication of supreme power. By a sinister coincidence it was here that she first met the other man, then unnoticed and little heeded, who was to cast upon her a fascination which in the end proved irresistible.

This man was Adam Albrecht, Count von Neipperg. There is something mysterious about his early years, and something baleful about his silent warfare with Napoleon. As a very young soldier he had been an Austrian officer in 1793. His command served in Bel-

gium; and there, in a skirmish, he was overpowered by the French in superior numbers, but resisted desperately. In the mêlée a saber slashed him across the right side of his face, and he was made prisoner. The wound deprived him of his right eye, so that for the rest of his life he was compelled to wear a black bandage to conceal the mutilation.

From that moment he conceived an undying hatred of the French, serving against them in the Tyrol and in Italy. He always claimed that had the Archduke Charles followed his advice, the Austrians would have forced Napoleon's army to capitulate at Marengo, thus bringing early eclipse to the rising star of Bonaparte. However this may be, Napoleon's success enraged Neipperg and made his hatred almost the hatred of a fiend.

Hitherto he had detested the French as a nation. Afterward he concentrated his malignity upon the person of Napoleon. In every way he tried to cross the path of that great soldier, and, though Neipperg was comparatively an unknown man, his indomitable purpose and his continued intrigues at last attracted the notice of the emperor; for in 1808 Napoleon wrote this significant sentence:

The Count von Neipperg is openly known to have been the enemy of the French.

Little did the great conqueror dream how deadly was the blow which this Austrian count was destined finally to deal him!

Neipperg, though his title was not a high one, belonged to the old nobility of Austria. He had proved his bravery in war and as a duelist, and he was a diplomat as well as a soldier. Despite his mutilation, he was a handsome and accomplished courtier, a man of wide experience, and one who bore himself in a manner which suggested the spirit of romance. According to Masson, he was an Austrian Don Juan, and had won the hearts of many women. At thirty he had formed a connection with an Italian woman named Teresa Pola, whom he had carried away from her husband. She had borne him five children; and in 1813 he had married her in order that these children might be made legitimate.

In his own sphere the activity of Neipperg was almost as remarkable as Napoleon's in a greater one. Apart from his exploits on the field of battle he had been attached to the Austrian embassy in Paris, and, strangely enough,

had been decorated by Napoleon himself with the golden eagle of the Legion of Honor. Four months later we find him minister of Austria at the court of Sweden, where he helped to lay the train of intrigue which was to detach Bernadotte from Napoleon's cause. In 1812, as has just been said, he was with Marie Louise for a short time at Dresden, hovering about her, already forming schemes. Two years after this he overthrew Murat at Naples; and then hurried on post-haste to urge Prince Eugène to abandon Bonaparte.

When the great struggle of 1814 neared its close, and Napoleon, fighting with his back to the wall, was about to succumb to the united armies of Europe, it was evident that the Austrian emperor would soon be able to separate his daughter from her husband. In fact, when Napoleon was sent to Elba, Marie Louise returned to Vienna. The cynical Austrian diplomats resolved that she should never again meet her imperial husband. She was made Duchess of Parma in Italy, and set out for her new possessions; and the man with the black band across his sightless eye was chosen to be her escort and companion.

When Neipperg received this commission he

was with Teresa Pola at Milan. A strange smile flitted across his face; and presently he remarked, with cynical frankness:

"Before six months I shall be her lover, and, later on, her husband."

He took up his post as chief escort of Marie Louise, and they journeyed slowly to Munich and Baden and Geneva, loitering on the way. Amid the great events which were shaking Europe this couple attracted slight attention. Napoleon, in Elba, longed for his wife and for his little son, the King of Rome. He sent countless messages and many couriers; but every message was intercepted, and no courier reached his destination. Meanwhile Marie Louise was lingering agreeably in Switzerland. She was happy to have escaped from the whirlpool of politics and war. Amid the romantic scenery through which she passed Neipperg was always by her side, attentive, devoted, trying in everything to please her. With him she passed delightful evenings. He sang to her in his rich barytone songs of love. He seemed romantic with a touch of mystery, a gallant soldier whose soul was also touched by sentiment.

One would have said that Marie Louise, the

daughter of an imperial line, would have been proof against the fascinations of a person so far inferior to herself in rank, and who, beside the great emperor, was less than nothing. Even granting that she had never really loved Napoleon, she might still have preferred to maintain her dignity, to share his fate, and to go down in history as the empress of the greatest man whom modern times have known.

But Marie Louise was, after all, a woman, and she followed the guidance of her heart. To her Napoleon was still the man who had met her amid the rain-storm at Courcelles, and had from the first moment when he touched her violated all the instincts of a virgin. Later he had in his way tried to make amends; but the horror of that first night had never wholly left her memory. Napoleon had unrolled before her the drama of sensuality, but her heart had not been given to him. She had been his empress. In a sense it might be more true to say that she had been his mistress. But she had never been duly wooed and won and made his wife—an experience which is the right of every woman. And so this Neipperg, with his deferential manners, his soothing voice, his magnetic touch, his ardor, and his devotion, appeased

that craving which the master of a hundred legions could not satisfy.

In less than the six months of which Neipperg had spoken the psychological moment had arrived. In the dim twilight she listened to his words of love; and then, drawn by that irresistible power which masters pride and woman's will, she sank into her lover's arms, yielding to his caresses, and knowing that she would be parted from him no more except by death.

From that moment he was bound to her by the closest ties and lived with her at the petty court of Parma. His prediction came true to the very letter. Teresa Pola died, and then Napoleon died, and after this Marie Louise and Neipperg were united in a morganatic marriage. Three children were born to them before his death in 1829.

It is interesting to note how much of an impression was made upon her by the final exile of her imperial husband to St. Helena. When the news was brought her she observed, casually:

"Thanks. By the way, I should like to ride this morning to Markenstein. Do you think the weather is good enough to risk it?"

Napoleon, on his side, passed through

agonies of doubt and longing when no letters came to him from Marie Louise. She was constantly in his thoughts during his exile at St. Helena. When his faithful friend and constant companion at St. Helena, the Count Las Casas, was ordered by Sir Hudson Lowe to depart from St. Helena, Napoleon wrote to him:

"Should you see, some day, my wife and son, embrace them. For two years I have, neither directly nor indirectly, heard from them. There has been on this island for six months a German botanist, who has seen them in the garden of Schoenbrunn a few months before his departure. The barbarians (meaning the English authorities at St. Helena) have carefully prevented him from coming to give me any news respecting them."

At last the truth was told him, and he received it with that high magnanimity, or it may be fatalism, which at times he was capable of showing. Never in all his days of exile did he say one word against her. Possibly in searching his own soul he found excuses such as we may find. In his will he spoke of her with great affection, and shortly before his death he said to his physician, Antommarchi:

"After my death, I desire that you will take my heart, put it in the spirits of wine, and that you carry it to Parma to my dear Marie Louise.

You will please tell her that I tenderly loved her—that I never ceased to love her. You will relate to her all that you have seen, and every particular respecting my situation and death."

The story of Marie Louise is pathetic, almost tragic. There is the taint of grossness about it; and yet, after all, there is a lesson in it—the lesson that true love cannot be forced or summoned at command, that it is destroyed before its birth by outrage, and that it goes out only when evoked by sympathy, by tenderness, and by devotion.

THE STORY OF THE CARLYLES

THE STORY OF THE CARLYLES

TO most persons, Tennyson was a remote and romantic figure. His homes in the Isle of Wight and at Aldworth had a dignified seclusion about them which was very appropriate to so great a poet, and invested him with a certain awe through which the multitude rarely penetrated. As a matter of fact, however, he was an excellent companion, a ready talker, and gifted with so much wit that it is a pity that more of his sayings have not been preserved to us.

One of the best known is that which was drawn from him after he and a number of friends had been spending an hour in company with Mr. and Mrs. Carlyle. The two Carlyles were unfortunately at their worst, and gave a superb specimen of domestic "nagging." Each caught up whatever the other said, and either turned it into ridicule, or tried to make the author of it an object of contempt.

This was, of course, exceedingly uncomfortable for such strangers as were present, and it

certainly gave no pleasure to their friends. On leaving the house, some one said to Tennyson:

"Isn't it a pity that such a couple ever married?"

"No, no," said Tennyson, with a sort of smile under his rough beard. "It's much better that two people should be made unhappy than four."

The world has pretty nearly come around to the verdict of the poet laureate. It is not probable that Thomas Carlyle would have made any woman happy as his wife, or that Jane Baillie Welsh would have made any man happy as her husband.

This sort of speculation would never have occurred had not Mr. Froude, in the early eighties, given his story about the Carlyles to the world. Carlyle went to his grave, an old man, highly honored, and with no trail of gossip behind him. His wife had died some sixteen years before, leaving a brilliant memory. The books of Mr. Froude seemed for a moment to have desecrated the grave, and to have shed a sudden and sinister light upon those who could not make the least defense for themselves.

For a moment, Carlyle seemed to have been a monster of harshness, cruelty, and almost

brutish feeling. On the other side, his wife took on the color of an evil-speaking, evil-thinking shrew, who tormented the life of her husband, and allowed herself to be possessed by some demon of unrest and discontent, such as few women of her station are ever known to suffer from.

Nor was it merely that the two were apparently ill-mated and unhappy with each other. There were hints and innuendos which looked toward some hidden cause for this unhappiness, and which aroused the curiosity of every one. That they might be clearer, Froude afterward wrote a book, bringing out more plainly—indeed, too plainly—his explanation of the Carlyle family skeleton. A multitude of documents then came from every quarter, and from almost every one who had known either of the Carlyles. Perhaps the result to-day has been more injurious to Froude than to the two Carlyles.

Many persons unjustly speak of Froude as having violated the confidence of his friends in publishing the letters of Mr. and Mrs. Carlyle. They take no heed of the fact that in doing this he was obeying Carlyle's express wishes, left behind in writing, and often urged on Froude

while Carlyle was still alive. Whether or not Froude ought to have accepted such a trust, one may perhaps hesitate to decide. That he did so is probably because he felt that if he refused, Carlyle might commit the same duty to another, who would discharge it with less delicacy and less discretion.

As it is, the blame, if it rests upon any one, should rest upon Carlyle. He collected the letters. He wrote the lines which burn and scorch with self-reproach. It is he who pressed upon the reluctant Froude the duty of printing and publishing a series of documents which, for the most part, should never have been published at all, and which have done equal harm to Carlyle, to his wife, and to Froude himself.

Now that everything has been written that is likely to be written by those claiming to possess personal knowledge of the subject, let us take up the volumes, and likewise the scattered fragments, and seek to penetrate the mystery of the most ill-assorted couple known to modern literature.

It is not necessary to bring to light, and in regular order, the external history of Thomas Carlyle, or of Jane Baillie Welsh, who married him. There is an extraordinary amount of

rather fanciful gossip about this marriage, and about the three persons who had to do with it.

Take first the principal figure, Thomas Carlyle. His life until that time had been a good deal more than the life of an ordinary countryman. Many persons represent him as a peasant; but he was descended from the ancient lords of a Scottish manor. There was something in his eye, and in the dominance of his nature, that made his lordly nature felt. Mr. Froude notes that Carlyle's hand was very small and unusually well shaped. Nor had his earliest appearance as a young man been commonplace, in spite of the fact that his parents were illiterate, so that his mother learned to read only after her sons had gone away to Edinburgh, in order that she might be able to enjoy their letters.

At that time in Scotland, as in Puritan New England, in each family the son who had the most notable "pairts" was sent to the university that he might become a clergyman. If there were a second son, he became an advocate or a doctor of medicine, while the sons of less distinction seldom went beyond the parish school, but settled down as farmers, horse-

dealers, or whatever might happen to come their way.

In the case of Thomas Carlyle, nature marked him out for something brilliant, whatever that might be. His quick sensibility, the way in which he acquired every sort of learning, his command of logic, and, withal, his swift, unerring gift of language, made it certain from the very first that he must be sent to the university as soon as he had finished school, and could afford to go.

At Edinburgh, where he matriculated in his fourteenth year, he astonished every one by the enormous extent of his reading, and by the firm hold he kept upon it. One hesitates to credit these so-called reminiscences which tell how he absorbed mountains of Greek and immense quantities of political economy and history and sociology and various forms of metaphysics, as every Scotsman is bound to do. That he read all night is a common story told of many a Scottish lad at college. We may believe, however, that Carlyle studied and read as most of his fellow students did, but far beyond them in extent.

When he had completed about half of his divinity course, he assured himself that he was

not intended for the life of a clergyman. One who reads his mocking sayings, or what seemed to be a clever string of jeers directed against religion, might well think that Carlyle was throughout his life an atheist, or an agnostic. He confessed to Irving that he did not believe in the Christian religion, and it was vain to hope that he ever would so believe.

Moreover, Carlyle had done something which was unusual at that time. He had taught in several local schools; but presently he came back to Edinburgh and openly made literature his profession. It was a daring thing to do; but Carlyle had unbounded confidence in himself—the confidence of a giant, striding forth into a forest, certain that he can make his way by sheer strength through the tangled meshes and the knotty branches that he knows will meet him and try to beat him back. Furthermore, he knew how to live on very little; he was unmarried; and he felt a certain ardor which beseemed his age and gifts.

Through the kindness of friends, he received some commissions to write in various books of reference; and in 1824, when he was twenty-nine years of age, he published a translation of

Legendre's *Geometry.* In the same year he published, in the *London Magazine,* his *Life of Schiller,* and also his translation of Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister.* This successful attack upon the London periodicals and reviews led to a certain complication with the other two characters in this story. It takes us to Jane Welsh, and also to Edward Irving.

Irving was three years older than Carlyle. The two men were friends, and both of them had been teaching in country schools, where both of them had come to know Miss Welsh. Irving's seniority gave him a certain prestige with the younger men, and naturally with Miss Welsh. He had won honors at the university, and now, as assistant to the famous Dr. Chalmers, he carried his silk robes in the jaunty fashion of one who has just ceased to be an undergraduate. While studying, he met Miss Welsh at Haddington, and there became her private instructor.

This girl was regarded in her native town as something of a personage. To read what has been written of her, one might suppose that she was almost a miracle of birth and breeding, and of intellect as well. As a matter of fact, in the little town of Haddington she was

simply *prima inter pares*. Her father was the local doctor, and while she had a comfortable home, and doubtless a chaise at her disposal, she was very far from the "opulence" which Carlyle, looking up at her from his lowlier surroundings, was accustomed to ascribe to her. She was, no doubt, a very clever girl; and, judging from the portraits taken of her at about this time, she was an exceedingly pretty one, with beautiful eyes and an abundance of dark glossy hair.

Even then, however, Miss Welsh had traits which might have made it certain that she would be much more agreeable as a friend than as a wife. She had become an *intellectuelle* quite prematurely—at an age, in fact, when she might better have been thinking of other things than the inwardness of her soul, or the folly of religious belief.

Even as a young girl, she was beset by a desire to criticize and to ridicule almost everything and every one that she encountered. It was only when she met with something that she could not understand, or some one who could do what she could not, that she became comparatively humble. Unconsciously, her chief ambition was to be herself distinguished,

and to marry some one who could be more distinguished still.

When she first met Edward Irving, she looked up to him as her superior in many ways. He was a striking figure in her small world. He was known in Edinburgh as likely to be a man of mark; and, of course, he had had a careful training in many subjects of which she, as yet, knew very little. Therefore, insensibly, she fell into a sort of admiration for Irving—an admiration which might have been transmuted into love. Irving, on his side, was taken by the young girl's beauty, her vivacity, and the keenness of her intellect. That he did not at once become her suitor is probably due to the fact that he had already engaged himself to a Miss Martin, of whom not much is known.

It was about this time, however, that Carlyle became acquainted with Miss Welsh. His abundant knowledge, his original and striking manner of commenting on it, his almost gigantic intellectual power, came to her as a revelation. Her studies with Irving were now interwoven with her admiration for Carlyle.

Since Irving was a clergyman, and Miss Welsh had not the slightest belief in any form of theology, there was comparatively little that

they had in common. On the other hand, when she saw the profundities of Carlyle, she at once half feared, and was half fascinated. Let her speak to him on any subject, and he would at once thunder forth some striking truth, or it might be some puzzling paradox; but what he said could never fail to interest her and to make her think. He had, too, an infinite sense of humor, often whimsical and shot through with sarcasm.

It is no wonder that Miss Welsh was more and more infatuated with the nature of Carlyle. If it was her conscious wish to marry a man whom she could reverence as a master, where should she find him—in Irving or in Carlyle?

Irving was a dreamer, a man who, she came to see, was thoroughly one-sided, and whose interests lay in a different sphere from hers. Carlyle, on the other hand, had already reached out beyond the little Scottish capital, and had made his mark in the great world of London, where men like De Quincey and Jeffrey thought it worth their while to run a tilt with him. Then, too, there was the fascination of his talk, in which Jane Welsh found a perpetual source of interest:

The English have never had an artist, except in poetry; no musician; no painter. Purcell and Hogarth are not exceptions, or only such as confirm the rule.

Is the true Scotchman the peasant and yeoman—chiefly the former?

Every living man is a visible mystery; he walks between two eternities and two infinitudes. Were we not blind as moles we should value our humanity at infinity, and our rank, influence and so forth—the trappings of our humanity—at nothing. Say I am a man, and you say all. Whether king or tinker is a mere appendix.

Understanding is to reason as the talent of a beaver—which can build houses, and uses its tail for a trowel—to the genius of a prophet and poet. Reason is all but extinct in this age; it can never be altogether extinguished.

The devil has his elect.

Is anything more wonderful than another, if you consider it maturely? I have seen no men rise from the dead; I have seen some thousands rise from nothing. I have not force to fly into the sun, but I have force to lift my hand, which is equally strange.

Is not every thought properly an inspiration? Or how is one thing more inspired than another?

Examine by logic the import of thy life, and of all lives. What is it? A making of meal into manure, and of manure into meal. To the *cui bono* there is no answer from logic.

In many ways Jane Welsh found the difference of range between Carlyle and Irving. At one time, she asked Irving about some German works, and he was obliged to send her to Carlyle to solve her difficulties. Carlyle knew German almost as well as if he had been born in Dresden; and the full and almost overflowing way in which he answered her gave her another impression of his potency. Thus she weighed the two men who might become her lovers, and little by little she came to think of Irving as partly shallow and partly narrow-minded, while Carlyle loomed up more of a giant than before.

It is not probable that she was a woman who could love profoundly. She thought too much about herself. She was too critical. She had too intense an ambition for "showing off." I can imagine that in the end she made her choice quite coolly. She was flattered by Carlyle's strong preference for her. She was perhaps repelled by Irving's engagement to another woman; yet at the time few persons thought that she had chosen well.

Irving had now gone to London, and had become the pastor of the Caledonian chapel in Hatton Garden. Within a year, by the ex-

traordinary power of his eloquence, which was in a style peculiar to himself, he had transformed an obscure little chapel into one which was crowded by the rich and fashionable. His congregation built for him a handsome edifice on Regent Square, and he became the leader of a new cult, which looked to a second personal advent of Christ. He cared nothing for the charges of heresy which were brought against him; and when he was deposed his congregation followed him, and developed a new Christian order, known as Irvingism.

Jane Welsh, in her musings, might rightfully have compared the two men and the future which each could give her. Did she marry Irving, she was certain of a life of ease in London, and an association with men and women of fashion and celebrity, among whom she could show herself to be the gifted woman that she was. Did she marry Carlyle, she must go with him to a desolate, wind-beaten cottage, far away from any of the things she cared for, working almost as a housemaid, having no company save that of her husband, who was already a dyspeptic, and who was wont to speak of feeling as if a rat were tearing out his stomach.

Who would have said that in going with Car-

lyle she had made the better choice? Any one would have said it who knew the three—Irving, Carlyle, and Jane Welsh.

She had the penetration to be certain that whatever Irving might possess at present, it would be nothing in comparison to what Carlyle would have in the coming future. She understood the limitations of Irving, but to her keen mind the genius of Carlyle was unlimited; and she foresaw that, after he had toiled and striven, he would come into his great reward, which she would share. Irving might be the leader of a petty sect, but Carlyle would be a man whose name must become known throughout the world.

And so, in 1826, she had made her choice, and had become the bride of the rough-spoken, domineering Scotsman who had to face the world with nothing but his creative brain and his stubborn independence. She had put aside all immediate thought of London and its lures; she was going to cast in her lot with Carlyle's, largely as a matter of calculation, and believing that she had made the better choice.

She was twenty-six and Carlyle was thirty-two when, after a brief residence in Edinburgh, they went down to Craigenputtock. Froude has

described this place as the dreariest spot in the British dominions:

> The nearest cottage is more than a mile from it; the elevation, seven hundred feet above the sea, stunts the trees and limits the garden produce; the house is gaunt and hungry-looking. It stands, with the scanty fields attached, as an island in a sea of morass. The landscape is unredeemed by grace or grandeur—mere undulating hills of grass and heather, with peat bogs in the hollows between them.

Froude's grim description has been questioned by some; yet the actual pictures that have been drawn of the place in later years make it look bare, desolate, and uninviting. Mrs. Carlyle, who owned it as an inheritance from her father, saw the place for the first time in March, 1828. She settled there in May; but May, in the Scottish hills, is almost as repellent as winter. She herself shrank from the adventure which she had proposed. It was her husband's notion, and her own, that they should live there in practical solitude. He was to think and write, and make for himself a beginning of real fame; while she was to hover over him and watch his minor comforts.

It seemed to many of their friends that the project was quixotic to a degree. Mrs. Car-

lyle's delicate health, her weak chest, and the beginning of a nervous disorder, made them think that she was unfit to dwell in so wild and bleak a solitude. They felt, too, that Carlyle was too much absorbed with his own thought to be trusted with the charge of a high-spirited woman.

However, the decision had been made, and the newly married couple went to Craigenputtock, with wagons that carried their household goods and those of Carlyle's brother, Alexander, who lived in a cottage near by. These were the two redeeming features of their lonely home—the presence of Alexander Carlyle, and the fact that, although they had no servants in the ordinary sense, there were several farm-hands and a dairy-maid.

Before long there came a period of trouble, which is easily explained by what has been already said. Carlyle, thinking and writing some of the most beautiful things that he ever thought or wrote, could not make allowance for his wife's high spirit and physical weakness. She, on her side—nervous, fitful, and hard to please—thought herself a slave, the servant of a harsh and brutal master. She screamed at him when her nerves were too unstrung; and

then, with a natural reaction, she called herself "a devil who could never be good enough for him." But most of her letters were harsh and filled with bitterness, and, no doubt, his conduct to her was at times no better than her own.

But it was at Craigenputtock that he really did lay fast and firm the road to fame. His wife's sharp tongue, and the gnawings of his own dyspepsia, were lived down with true Scottish grimness. It was here that he wrote some of his most penetrating and sympathetic essays, which were published by the leading reviews of England and Scotland. Here, too, he began to teach his countrymen the value of German literature.

The most remarkable of his productions was that strange work entitled *Sartor Resartus* (1834), an extraordinary mixture of the sublime and the grotesque. The book quivers and shakes with tragic pathos, with inward agonies, with solemn aspirations, and with riotous humor.

In 1834, after six years at Craigenputtock, the Carlyles moved to London, and took up their home in Cheyne Row, Chelsea, a far from fashionable retreat, but one in which the comforts of life could be more readily secured. It was

there that Thomas Carlyle wrote what must seem to us the most vivid of all his books, the *History of the French Revolution.* For this he had read and thought for many years; parts of it he had written in essays, and parts of it he had jotted down in journals. But now it came forth, as some one has said, "a truth clad in hell-fire," swirling amid clouds and flames and mist, a most wonderful picture of the accumulated social and political falsehoods which preceded the revolution, and which were swept away by a nemesis that was the righteous judgment of God.

Carlyle never wrote so great a book as this. He had reached his middle style, having passed the clarity of his early writings, and not having yet reached the thunderous, strange-mouthed German expletives which marred his later work. In the *French Revolution* he bursts forth, here and there, into furious Gallic oaths and Gargantuan epithets; yet this apocalypse of France seems more true than his hero-worshiping of old Frederick of Prussia, or even of English Cromwell.

All these days Thomas Carlyle lived a life which was partly one of seclusion and partly one of pleasure. At all times he and his dark-

haired wife had their own sets, and mingled with their own friends. Jane had no means of discovering just whether she would have been happier with Irving; for Irving died while she was still digging potatoes and complaining of her lot at Craigenputtock.

However this may be, the Carlyles, man and wife, lived an existence that was full of unhappiness and rancor. Jane Carlyle became an invalid, and sought to allay her nervous sufferings with strong tea and tobacco and morphin. When a nervous woman takes to morphin, it almost always means that she becomes intensely jealous; and so it was with Jane Carlyle.

A shivering, palpitating, fiercely loyal bit of humanity, she took it into her head that her husband was infatuated with Lady Ashburton, or that Lady Ashburton was infatuated with him. She took to spying on them, and at times, when her nerves were all a jangle, she would lie back in her armchair and yell with paroxysms of anger. On the other hand, Carlyle, eager to enjoy the world, sought relief from his household cares, and sometimes stole away after a fashion that was hardly guileless. He would leave false addresses at his house, and would dine at other places than he had announced.

In 1866 Jane Carlyle suddenly died; and somehow, then, the conscience of Thomas Carlyle became convinced that he had wronged the woman whom he had really loved. His last fifteen years were spent in wretchedness and despair. He felt that he had committed the unpardonable sin. He recalled with anguish every moment of their early life at Craigenputtock—how she had toiled for him, and waited upon him, and made herself a slave; and how, later, she had given herself up entirely to him, while he had thoughtlessly received the sacrifice, and trampled on it as on a bed of flowers.

Of course, in all this he was intensely morbid, and the diary which he wrote was no more sane and wholesome than the screamings with which his wife had horrified her friends. But when he had grown to be a very old man, he came to feel that this was all a sort of penance, and that the selfishness of his past must be expiated in the future. Therefore, he gave his diary to his friend, the historian, Froude, and urged him to publish the letters and memorials of Jane Welsh Carlyle. Mr. Froude, with an eye to the reading world, readily did so, furnishing them with abundant foot-notes, which

made Carlyle appear to the world as more or less of a monster.

First, there was set forth the almost continual unhappiness of the pair. In the second place, by hint, by innuendo, and sometimes by explicit statement, there were given reasons to show why Carlyle made his wife unhappy. Of course, his gnawing dyspepsia, which she strove with all her might to drive away, was one of the first and greatest causes. But again another cause of discontent was stated in the implication that Carlyle, in his bursts of temper, actually abused his wife. In one passage there is a hint that certain blue marks upon her arm were bruises, the result of blows.

Most remarkable of all these accusations is that which has to do with the relations of Carlyle and Lady Ashburton. There is no doubt that Jane Carlyle disliked this brilliant woman, and came to have dark suspicions concerning her. At first, it was only a sort of social jealousy. Lady Ashburton was quite as clever a talker as Mrs. Carlyle, and she had a prestige which brought her more admiration.

Then, by degrees, as Jane Carlyle's mind began to wane, she transferred her jealousy to her husband himself. She hated to be out-

shone, and now, in some misguided fashion, it came into her head that Carlyle had surrendered to Lady Ashburton his own attention to his wife, and had fallen in love with her brilliant rival.

On one occasion, she declared that Lady Ashburton had thrown herself at Carlyle's feet, but that Carlyle had acted like a man of honor, while Lord Ashburton, knowing all the facts, had passed them over, and had retained his friendship with Carlyle.

Now, when Froude came to write *My Relations with Carlyle,* there were those who were very eager to furnish him with every sort of gossip. The greatest source of scandal upon which he drew was a woman named Geraldine Jewsbury, a curious neurotic creature, who had seen much of the late Mrs. Carlyle, but who had an almost morbid love of offensive tattle. Froude describes himself as a witness for six years, at Cheyne Row, "of the enactment of a tragedy as stern and real as the story of Œdipus." According to his own account:

> I stood by, consenting to the slow martyrdom of a woman whom I have described as bright and sparkling and tender, and I uttered no word of remonstrance. I saw her involved in a perpetual blizzard, and did nothing to shelter her.

But it is not upon his own observations that Froude relies for his most sinister evidence against his friend. To him comes Miss Jewsbury with a lengthy tale to tell. It is well to know what Mrs. Carlyle thought of this lady. She wrote:

> It is her besetting sin, and her trade of novelist has aggravated it—the desire of feeling and producing violent emotions. . . . Geraldine has one besetting weakness; she is never happy unless she has a *grande passion* on hand.

There were strange manifestations on the part of Miss Jewsbury toward Mrs. Carlyle. At one time, when Mrs. Carlyle had shown some preference for another woman, it led to a wild outburst of what Miss Jewsbury herself called "tiger jealousy." There are many other instances of violent emotions in her letters to Mrs. Carlyle. They are often highly charged and erotic. It is unusual for a woman of thirty-two to write to a woman friend, who is forty-three years of age, in these words, which Miss Jewsbury used in writing to Mrs. Carlyle:

> You are never out of my thoughts one hour together. I think of you much more than if you were my lover. I cannot express my feelings, even to you —vague, undefined yearnings to be yours in some way.

Mrs. Carlyle was accustomed, in private, to speak of Miss Jewsbury as "Miss Gooseberry," while Carlyle himself said that she was simply "a flimsy tatter of a creature." But it is on the testimony of this one woman, who was so morbid and excitable, that the most serious accusations against Carlyle rest. She knew that Froude was writing a volume about Mrs. Carlyle, and she rushed to him, eager to furnish any narratives, however strange, improbable, or salacious they might be.

Thus she is the sponsor of the Ashburton story, in which there is nothing whatsoever. Some of the letters which Lady Ashburton wrote Carlyle have been destroyed, but not before her husband had perused them. Another set of letters had never been read by Lord Ashburton at all, and they are still preserved—friendly, harmless, usual letters. Lord Ashburton always invited Carlyle to his house, and there is no reason to think that the Scottish philosopher wronged him.

There is much more to be said about the charge that Mrs. Carlyle suffered from personal abuse; yet when we examine the facts, the evidence resolves itself into practically nothing. That, in his self-absorption, he allowed her to

do household work, and wait upon him like a servant, in the dreary hovel of Craigenputtock, may well be true. She had married him with just that hope—that he would, by his pen and brain, become a genius whom all the world should know. That she grew nervous, and that he became dyspeptic, was only what might have been expected; that her tongue was sharp, and that he was often rough—this is no strange thing. Mr. Froude hints that he actually struck her, but there is no evidence of this.

The only other charge that has been made against him is one that has been whispered about in nooks and corners, and was spoken of quite frankly by the imaginative Geraldine. Briefly stated, it is to the effect that Carlyle's constitution was such that he should never have married, and that much of his wife's unhappiness, in her early years, came from this source, and from her childlessness. It is not well to say much on this head; for the evidence all rests upon the "tigerish" Geraldine Jewsbury.

It seems to me that a single letter, written by Jane Carlyle at the end of her first twelvemonth at Craigenputtock, during a brief absence from home, disproves this theory, and shows that in the early years of their married life her heart

overflowed toward a man who must have been a manly, loving lover. She calls him by the name by which he called her—a homely Scottish name.

GOODY, GOODY, DEAR GOODY:

You said you would weary, and I do hope in my heart you are wearying. It will be so sweet to make it all up to you in kisses when I return. You will take me and hear all my bits of experiences, and your heart will beat when you find how I have longed to return to you. Darling, dearest, loveliest, the Lord bless you! I think of you every hour, every moment. I love you and admire you, like—like anything. Oh, if I was there, I could put my arms so close about your neck, and hush you into the softest sleep you have had since I went away. Good night. Dream of me. I am ever

YOUR OWN GOODY.

It seems most fitting to remember Thomas Carlyle as a man of strength, of honor, and of intellect; and his wife as one who was sorely tried, but who came out of her suffering into the arms of death, purified and calm and worthy to be remembered by her husband's side.

THE STORY OF GEORGE SAND

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TO the student of feminine psychology there is no more curious and complex problem than the one that meets us in the life of the gifted French writer best known to the world as George Sand.

To analyze this woman simply as a writer would in itself be a long, difficult task. She wrote voluminously, with a fluid rather than a fluent pen. She scandalized her contemporaries by her theories, and by the way in which she applied them in her novels. Her fiction made her, in the history of French literature, second only to Victor Hugo. She might even challenge Hugo, because where he depicts strange and monstrous figures, exaggerated beyond the limits of actual life, George Sand portrays living men and women, whose instincts and desires she understands, and whom she makes us see precisely as if we were admitted to their intimacy.

But George Sand puzzles us most by peculiarities which it is difficult for us to reconcile. She seemed to have no sense of chastity

whatever; yet, on the other hand, she was not grossly sensual. She possessed the maternal instinct to a high degree, and liked better to be a mother than a mistress to the men whose love she sought. For she did seek men's love, frankly and shamelessly, only to tire of it. In many cases she seems to have been swayed by vanity, and by a love of conquest, rather than by passion. She had also a spiritual, imaginative side to her nature, and she could be a far better comrade than anything more intimate.

The name given to this strange genius at birth was Amantine Lucile Aurore Dupin. The circumstances of her ancestry and birth were quite unusual. Her father was a lieutenant in the French army. His grandmother had been the natural daughter of Marshal Saxe, who was himself the illegitimate son of Augustus the Strong of Poland and of the bewitching Countess of Königsmarck. This was a curious pedigree. It meant strength of character, eroticism, stubbornness, imagination, courage, and recklessness.

Her father complicated the matter by marrying suddenly a Parisian of the lower classes, a bird-fancier named Sophie Delaborde. His

daughter, who was born in 1804, used afterward to boast that on one side she was sprung from kings and nobles, while on the other she was a daughter of the people, able, therefore, to understand the sentiments of the aristocracy and of the children of the soil, or even of the gutter.

She was fond of telling, also, of the omen which attended on her birth. Her father and mother were at a country dance in the house of a fellow officer of Dupin's. Suddenly Mme. Dupin left the room. Nothing was thought of this, and the dance went on. In less than an hour, Dupin was called aside and told that his wife had just given birth to a child. It was the child's aunt who brought the news, with the joyous comment:

"She will be lucky, for she was born among the roses and to the sound of music."

This was at the time of the Napoleonic wars. Lieutenant Dupin was on the staff of Prince Murat, and little Aurore, as she was called, at the age of three accompanied the army, as did her mother. The child was adopted by one of those hard-fighting, veteran regiments. The rough old sergeants nursed her and petted her. Even the prince took notice of her; and to

please him she wore the green uniform of a hussar.

But all this soon passed, and she was presently sent to live with her grandmother at the estate now intimately associated with her name —Nohant, in the valley of the Indre, in the midst of a rich country, a love for which she then drank in so deeply that nothing in her later life could lessen it. She was always the friend of the peasant and of the country-folk in general.

At Nohant she was given over to her grandmother, to be reared in a strangely desultory sort of fashion, doing and reading and studying those things which could best develop her native gifts. Her father had great influence over her, teaching her a thousand things without seeming to teach her anything. Of him George Sand herself has written:

> Character is a matter of heredity. If any one desires to know me, he must know my father.

Her father, however, was killed by a fall from a horse; and then the child grew up almost without any formal education. A tutor, who also managed the estate, believed with Rousseau that the young should be reared according to their own preferences. Therefore, Aurore read

poems and childish stories; she gained a smattering of Latin, and she was devoted to music and the elements of natural science. For the rest of the time she rambled with the country children, learned their games, and became a sort of leader in everything they did.

Her only sorrow was the fact that her mother was excluded from Nohant. The aristocratic old grandmother would not allow under her roof her son's low-born wife; but she was devoted to her little grandchild. The girl showed a wonderful degree of sensibility.

This life was adapted to her nature. She fed her imagination in a perfectly healthy fashion; and, living so much out of doors, she acquired that sound physique which she retained all through her life.

When she was thirteen, her grandmother sent the girl to a convent school in Paris. One might suppose that the sudden change from the open woods and fields to the primness of a religious home would have been a great shock to her, and that with her disposition she might have broken out into wild ways that would have shocked the nuns. But, here, as elsewhere, she showed her wonderful adaptability. It even seemed as if she were likely to become what the

French call a *dévote*. She gave herself up to mythical thoughts, and expressed a desire of taking the veil. Her confessor, however, was a keen student of human nature, and he perceived that she was too young to decide upon the renunciation of earthly things. Moreover, her grandmother, who had no intention that Aurore should become a nun, hastened to Paris and carried her back to Nohant.

The girl was now sixteen, and her complicated nature began to make itself apparent. There was no one to control her, because her grandmother was confined to her own room. And so Aurore Dupin, now in superb health, rushed into every sort of diversion with all the zest of youth. She read voraciously—religion, poetry, philosophy. She was an excellent musician, playing the piano and the harp. Once, in a spirit of unconscious egotism, she wrote to her confessor:

> Do you think that my philosophical studies are compatible with Christian humility?

The shrewd ecclesiastic answered, with a touch of wholesome irony:

> I doubt, my daughter, whether your philosophical studies are profound enough to warrant intellectual pride.

This stung the girl, and led her to think a little less of her own abilities; but perhaps it made her books distasteful to her. For a while she seems to have almost forgotten her sex. She began to dress as a boy, and took to smoking large quantities of tobacco. Her natural brother, who was an officer in the army, came down to Nohant and taught her to ride—to ride like a boy, seated astride. She went about without any chaperon, and flirted with the young men of the neighborhood. The prim manners of the place made her subject to a certain amount of scandal, and the village priest chided her in language that was far from tactful. In return she refused any longer to attend his church.

Thus she was living when her grandmother died, in 1821, leaving to Aurore her entire fortune of five hundred thousand francs. As the girl was still but seventeen, she was placed under the guardianship of the nearest relative on her father's side—a gentleman of rank. When the will was read, Aurore's mother made a violent protest, and caused a most unpleasant scene.

"I am the natural guardian of my child," she cried. "No one can take away my rights!"

The young girl well understood that this was really the parting of the ways. If she turned toward her uncle, she would be forever classed among the aristocracy. If she chose her mother, who, though married, was essentially a *grisette,* then she must live with *grisettes,* and find her friends among the friends who visited her mother. She could not belong to both worlds. She must decide once for all whether she would be a woman of rank or a woman entirely separated from the circle that had been her father's.

One must respect the girl for making the choice she did. Understanding the situation absolutely, she chose her mother; and perhaps one would not have had her do otherwise. Yet in the long run it was bound to be a mistake. Aurore was clever, refined, well read, and had had the training of a fashionable convent school. The mother was ignorant and coarse, as was inevitable, with one who before her marriage had been half shop-girl and half courtesan. The two could not live long together, and hence it was not unnatural that Aurore Dupin should marry, to enter upon a new career.

Her fortune was a fairly large one for the times, and yet not large enough to attract men who were quite her equals. Presently, however,

it brought to her a sort of country squire, named Casimir Dudevant. He was the illegitimate son of the Baron Dudevant. He had been in the army, and had studied law; but he possessed no intellectual tastes. He was outwardly eligible; but he was of a coarse type—a man who, with passing years, would be likely to take to drink and vicious amusements, and in serious life cared only for his cattle, his horses, and his hunting. He had, however, a sort of jollity about him which appealed to this girl of eighteen; and so a marriage was arranged. Aurore Dupin became his wife in 1822, and he secured the control of her fortune.

The first few years after her marriage were not unhappy. She had a son, Maurice Dudevant, and a daughter, Solange, and she loved them both. But it was impossible that she should continue vegetating mentally upon a farm with a husband who was a fool, a drunkard, and a miser. He deteriorated; his wife grew more and more clever. Dudevant resented this. It made him uncomfortable. Other persons spoke of her talk as brilliant. He bluntly told her that it was silly, and that she must stop it. When she did not stop it, he boxed her ears. This caused a breach between the pair

which was never healed. Dudevant drank more and more heavily, and jeered at his wife because she was "always looking for noon at fourteen o'clock." He had always flirted with the country girls; but now he openly consorted with his wife's chambermaid.

Mme. Dudevant, on her side, would have nothing more to do with this rustic rake. She formed what she called a platonic friendship—and it was really so—with a certain M. de Sèze, who was advocate-general at Bordeaux. With him this clever woman could talk without being called silly, and he took sincere pleasure in her company. He might, in fact, have gone much further, had not both of them been in an impossible situation.

Aurore Dudevant really believed that she was swayed by a pure and mystic passion. De Sèze, on the other hand, believed this mystic passion to be genuine love. Coming to visit her at Nohant, he was revolted by the clownish husband with whom she lived. It gave him an esthetic shock to see that she had borne children to this boor. Therefore he shrank back from her, and in time their relation faded into nothingness.

It happened, soon after, that she found a packet in her husband's desk, marked "Not to

be opened until after my death." She wrote of this in her correspondence:

> I had not the patience to wait till widowhood. No one can be sure of surviving anybody. I assumed that my husband had died, and I was very glad to learn what he thought of me while he was alive. Since the package was addressed to me, it was not dishonorable for me to open it.

And so she opened it. It proved to be his will, but containing, as a preamble, his curses on her, expressions of contempt, and all the vulgar outpouring of an evil temper and angry passion. She went to her husband as he was opening a bottle, and flung the document upon the table. He cowered at her glance, at her firmness, and at her cold hatred. He grumbled and argued and entreated; but all that his wife would say in answer was:

"I must have an allowance. I am going to Paris, and my children are to remain here."

At last he yielded, and she went at once to Paris, taking her daughter with her, and having the promise of fifteen hundred francs a year out of the half-million that was hers by right.

In Paris she developed into a thorough-paced Bohemian. She tried to make a living in sundry hopeless ways, and at last she took to litera-

ture. She was living in a garret, with little to eat, and sometimes without a fire in winter. She had some friends who helped her as well as they could, but though she was attached to the *Figaro,* her earnings for the first month amounted to only fifteen francs.

Nevertheless, she would not despair. The editors and publishers might turn the cold shoulder to her, but she would not give up her ambitions. She went down into the Latin Quarter, and there shook off the proprieties of life. She assumed the garb of a man, and with her quick perception she came to know the left bank of the Seine just as she had known the countryside at Nohant or the little world at her convent school. She never expected again to see any woman of her own rank in life. Her mother's influence became strong in her. She wrote:

> The proprieties are the guiding principle of people without soul and virtue. The good opinion of the world is a prostitute who gives herself to the highest bidder.

She still pursued her trade of journalism, calling herself a "newspaper mechanic," sitting all day in the office of the *Figaro* and writing whatever was demanded, while at night she

would prowl in the streets haunting the cafés, continuing to dress like a man, drinking sour wine, and smoking cheap cigars.

One of her companions in this sort of hand-to-mouth journalism was a young student and writer named Jules Sandeau, a man seven years younger than his comrade. He was at that time as indigent as she, and their hardships, shared in common, brought them very close together. He was clever, boyish, and sensitive, and it was not long before he had fallen at her feet and kissed her knees, begging that she would requite the love he felt for her. According to herself, she resisted him for six months, and then at last she yielded. The two made their home together, and for a while were wonderfully happy. Their work and their diversions they enjoyed in common, and now for the first time she experienced emotions which in all probability she had never known before.

Probably not very much importance is to be given to the earlier flirtations of George Sand, though she herself never tried to stop the mouth of scandal. Even before she left her husband, she was credited with having four lovers; but all she said, when the report was brought to her, was this: "Four lovers are

none too many for one with such lively passions as mine."

This very frankness makes it likely that she enjoyed shocking her prim neighbors at Nohant. But if she only played at love-making then, she now gave herself up to it with entire abandonment, intoxicated, fascinated, satisfied. She herself wrote:

> How I wish I could impart to you this sense of the intensity and joyousness of life that I have in my veins. To live! How sweet it is, and how good, in spite of annoyances, husbands, debts, relations, scandal-mongers, sufferings, and irritations! To live! It is intoxicating! To love, and to be loved! It is happiness! It is heaven!

In collaboration with Jules Sandeau, she wrote a novel called *Rose et Blanche.* The two lovers were uncertain what name to place upon the title-page, but finally they hit upon the pseudonym of Jules Sand. The book succeeded; but thereafter each of them wrote separately, Jules Sandeau using his own name, and Mme. Dudevant styling herself George Sand, a name by which she was to be illustrious ever after.

As a novelist, she had found her real vocation. She was not yet well known, but she was on the

verge of fame. As soon as she had written *Indiana* and *Valentine,* George Sand had secured a place in the world of letters. The magazine which still exists as the *Revue des Deux Mondes* gave her a retaining fee of four thousand francs a year, and many other publications begged her to write serial stories for them.

The vein which ran through all her stories was new and piquant. As was said of her:

> In George Sand, whenever a lady wishes to change her lover, God is always there to make the transfer easy.

In other words, she preached free love in the name of religion. This was not a new doctrine with her. After the first break with her husband, she had made up her mind about certain matters, and wrote:

> One is no more justified in claiming the ownership of a soul than in claiming the ownership of a slave.

According to her, the ties between a man and a woman are sacred only when they are sanctified by love; and she distinguished between love and passion in this epigram:

> Love seeks to give, while passion seeks to take.

At this time, George Sand was in her twenty-seventh year. She was not beautiful, though there was something about her which attracted observation. Of middle height, she was fairly slender. Her eyes were somewhat projecting, and her mouth was almost sullen when in repose. Her manners were peculiar, combining boldness with timidity. Her address was almost as familiar as a man's, so that it was easy to be acquainted with her; yet a certain haughtiness and a touch of aristocratic pride made it plain that she had drawn a line which none must pass without her wish. When she was deeply stirred, however, she burst forth into an extraordinary vivacity, showing a nature richly endowed and eager to yield its treasures.

The existence which she now led was a curious one. She still visited her husband at Nohant, so that she might see her son, and sometimes, when M. Dudevant came to town, he called upon her in the apartments which she shared with Jules Sandeau. He had accepted the situation, and with his crudeness and lack of feeling he seemed to think it, if not natural, at least diverting. At any rate, so long as he could retain her half-million francs,

he was not the man to make trouble about his former wife's arrangements.

Meanwhile, there began to be perceptible the very slightest rift within the lute of her romance. Was her love for Sandeau really love, or was it only passion? In his absence, at any rate, the old obsession still continued. Here we see, first of all, intense pleasure shading off into a sort of maternal fondness. She sends Sandeau adoring letters. She is afraid that his delicate appetite is not properly satisfied.

Yet, again, there are times when she feels that he is irritating and ill. Those who knew them said that her nature was too passionate and her love was too exacting for him. One of her letters seems to make this plain. She writes that she feels uneasy, and even frightfully remorseful, at seeing Sandeau "pine away." She knows, she avows, that she is killing him, that her caresses are a poison, and her love a consuming fire.

It is an appalling thought, and Jules will not understand it. He laughs at it; and when, in the midst of his transports of delight, the idea comes to me and makes my blood run cold, he tells me that here is the death that he would like to die. At such moments he promises whatever I make him promise.

This letter throws a clear light upon the nature of George Sand's temperament. It will be found all through her career, not only that she sought to inspire passion, but that she strove to gratify it after fashions of her own. One little passage from a description of her written by the younger Dumas will perhaps make this phase of her character more intelligible, without going further than is strictly necessary:

> Mme. Sand has little hands without any bones, soft and plump. She is by destiny a woman of excessive curiosity, always disappointed, always deceived in her incessant investigation, but she is not fundamentally ardent. In vain would she like to be so, but she does not find it possible. Her physical nature utterly refuses.

The reader will find in all that has now been said the true explanation of George Sand. Abounding with life, but incapable of long stretches of ardent love, she became a woman who sought conquests everywhere without giving in return more than her temperament made it possible for her to do. She loved Sandeau as much as she ever loved any man; and yet she left him with a sense that she had never become wholly his. Perhaps this is the reason why their

romance came to an end abruptly, and not altogether fittingly.

She had been spending a short time at Nohant, and came to Paris without announcement. She intended to surprise her lover, and she surely did so. She found him in the apartment that had been theirs, with his arms about an attractive laundry-girl. Thus closed what was probably the only true romance in the life of George Sand. Afterward she had many lovers, but to no one did she so nearly become a true mate.

As it was, she ended her association with Sandeau, and each pursued a separate path to fame. Sandeau afterward became a well-known novelist and dramatist. He was, in fact, the first writer of fiction who was admitted to the French Academy. The woman to whom he had been unfaithful became greater still, because her fame was not only national, but cosmopolitan.

For a time after her deception by Sandeau, she felt absolutely devoid of all emotions. She shunned men, and sought the friendship of Marie Dorval, a clever actress who was destined afterward to break the heart of Alfred de Vigny. The two went down into the country;

and there George Sand wrote hour after hour, sitting by her fireside, and showing herself a tender mother to her little daughter Solange.

This life lasted for a while, but it was not the sort of life that would now content her. She had many visitors from Paris, among them Sainte-Beuve, the critic, who brought with him Prosper Mérimée, then unknown, but later famous as master of revels to the third Napoleon and as the author of *Carmen*. Mérimée had a certain fascination of manner, and the predatory instincts of George Sand were again aroused. One day, when she felt bored and desperate, Mérimée paid his court to her, and she listened to him. This is one of the most remarkable of her intimacies, since it began, continued, and ended all in the space of a single week. When Mérimée left Nohant, he was destined never again to see George Sand, except long afterward at a dinner-party, where the two stared at each other sharply, but did not speak. This affair, however, made it plain that she could not long remain at Nohant, and that she pined for Paris.

Returning thither, she is said to have set her cap at Victor Hugo, who was, however, too much in love with himself to care for any one,

especially a woman who was his literary rival. She is said for a time to have been allied with Gustave Planché, a dramatic critic; but she always denied this, and her denial may be taken as quite truthful. Soon, however, she was to begin an episode which has been more famous than any other in her curious history, for she met Alfred de Musset, then a youth of twenty-three, but already well known for his poems and his plays.

Musset was of noble birth. He would probably have been better for a plebeian strain, since there was in him a touch of the degenerate. His mother's father had published a humanitarian poem on cats. His great-uncle had written a peculiar novel. Young Alfred was nervous, delicate, slightly epileptic, and it is certain that he was given to dissipation, which so far had affected his health only by making him hysterical. He was an exceedingly handsome youth, with exquisite manners, "dreamy rather than dazzling eyes, dilated nostrils, and vermilion lips half opened." Such was he when George Sand, then seven years his senior, met him.

There is something which, to the Anglo-Saxon mind, seems far more absurd than pathetic

about the events which presently took place. A woman like George Sand at thirty was practically twice the age of this nervous boy of twenty-three, who had as yet seen little of the world. At first she seemed to realize the fact herself; but her vanity led her to begin an intrigue, which must have been almost wholly without excitement on her part, but which to him, for a time, was everything in the world.

Experimenting, as usual, after the fashion described by Dumas, she went with De Musset for a "honeymoon" to Fontainebleau. But they could not stay there forever, and presently they decided upon a journey to Italy. Before they went, however, they thought it necessary to get formal permission from Alfred's mother!

Naturally enough, Mme. de Musset refused consent. She had read George Sand's romances, and had asked scornfully:

"Has the woman never in her life met a gentleman?"

She accepted the relations between them, but that she should be asked to sanction this sort of affair was rather too much, even for a French mother who has become accustomed to many strange things. Then there was a curious happening. At nine o'clock at night, George Sand

took a cab and drove to the house of Mme. de Musset, to whom she sent up a message that a lady wished to see her. Mme. de Musset came down, and, finding a woman alone in a carriage, she entered it. Then George Sand burst forth in a torrent of sentimental eloquence. She overpowered her lover's mother, promised to take great care of the delicate youth, and finally drove away to meet Alfred at the coach-yard.

They started off in the mist, their coach being the thirteenth to leave the yard; but the two lovers were in a merry mood, and enjoyed themselves all the way from Paris to Marseilles. By steamer they went to Leghorn; and finally, in January, 1834, they took an apartment in a hotel at Venice. What had happened that their arrival in Venice should be the beginning of a quarrel, no one knows. George Sand has told the story, and Paul de Musset—Alfred's brother—has told the story, but each of them has doubtless omitted a large part of the truth.

It is likely that on their long journey each had learned too much of the other. Thus, Paul de Musset says that George Sand made herself outrageous by her conversation, telling every one of her mother's adventures in the army of Italy, including her relations with the general-

in-chief. She also declared that she herself was born within a month of her parents' wedding-day. Very likely she did say all these things, whether they were true or not. She had set herself to wage war against conventional society, and she did everything to shock it.

On the other hand, Alfred de Musset fell ill after having lost ten thousand francs in a gambling-house. George Sand was not fond of persons who were ill. She herself was working like a horse, writing from eight to thirteen hours a day. When Musset collapsed she sent for a handsome young Italian doctor named Pagello, with whom she had struck up a casual acquaintance. He finally cured Musset, but he also cured George Sand of any love for Musset.

Before long she and Pagello were on their way back to Paris, leaving the poor, fevered, whimpering poet to bite his nails and think unutterable things. But he ought to have known George Sand. After that, everybody knew her. They knew just how much she cared when she professed to care, and when she acted as she acted with Pagello no earlier lover had any one but himself to blame.

Only sentimentalists can take this story seriously. To them it has a sort of morbid interest.

They like to picture Musset raving and shouting in his delirium, and then to read how George Sand sat on Pagello's knees, kissing him and drinking out of the same cup. But to the healthy mind the whole story is repulsive—from George Sand's appeal to Mme. de Musset down to the very end, when Pagello came to Paris, where his broken French excited a polite ridicule.

There was a touch of genuine sentiment about the affair with Jules Sandeau; but after that, one can only see in George Sand a half-libidinous *grisette,* such as her mother was before her, with a perfect willingness to experiment in every form of lawless love. As for Musset, whose heart she was supposed to have broken, within a year he was dangling after the famous singer, Mme. Malibran, and writing poems to her which advertised their intrigue.

After this episode with Pagello, it cannot be said that the life of George Sand was edifying in any respect, because no one can assume that she was sincere. She had loved Jules Sandeau as much as she could love any one, but all the rest of her intrigues and affinities were in the nature of experiments. She even took back Alfred de Musset, although they could

never again regard each other without suspicion. George Sand cut off all her hair and gave it to Musset, so eager was she to keep him as a matter of conquest; but he was tired of her, and even this theatrical trick was of no avail.

She proceeded to other less known and less humiliating adventures. She tried to fascinate the artist Delacroix. She set her cap at Franz Liszt, who rather astonished her by saying that only God was worthy to be loved. She expressed a yearning for the affections of the elder Dumas; but that good-natured giant laughed at her, and in fact gave her some sound advice, and let her smoke unsentimentally in his study. She was a good deal taken with a noisy demagogue named Michel, a lawyer at Bourges, who on one occasion shut her up in her room and harangued her on sociology until she was as weary of his talk as of his wooden shoes, his shapeless greatcoat, his spectacles, and his skull-cap. Balzac felt her fascination, but cared nothing for her, since his love was given to Mme. Hanska.

In the meanwhile, she was paying visits to her husband at Nohant, where she wrangled with him over money matters, and where he

would once have shot her had the guests present not interfered. She secured her dowry by litigation, so that she was well off, even without her literary earnings. These were by no means so large as one would think from her popularity and from the number of books she wrote. It is estimated that her whole gains amounted to about a million francs, extending over a period of forty-five years. It is just half the amount that Trollope earned in about the same period, and justifies his remark—"adequate, but not splendid."

One of those brief and strange intimacies that marked the career of George Sand came about in a curious way. Octave Feuillet, a man of aristocratic birth, had set himself to write novels which portrayed the cynicism and hardness of the upper classes in France. One of these novels, *Sibylle,* excited the anger of George Sand. She had not known Feuillet before; yet now she sought him out, at first in order to berate him for his book, but in the end to add him to her variegated string of lovers.

It has been said of Feuillet that he was a sort of "domesticated Musset." At any rate, he was far less sensitive than Musset, and George

Sand was about seventeen years his senior. They parted after a short time, she going her way as a writer of novels that were very different from her earlier ones, while Feuillet grew more and more cynical and even stern, as he lashed the abnormal, neuropathic men and women about him.

The last great emotional crisis in George Sand's life was that which centers around her relations with Frédéric Chopin. Chopin was the greatest genius who ever loved her. It is rather odd that he loved her. She had known him for two years, and had not seriously thought of him, though there is a story that when she first met him she kissed him before he had even been presented to her. She waited two years, and in those two years she had three lovers. Then at last she once more met Chopin, when he was in a state of melancholy, because a Polish girl had proved unfaithful to him.

It was the psychological moment; for this other woman, who was a devourer of hearts, found him at a piano, improvising a lamentation. George Sand stood beside him, listening. When he finished and looked up at her, their eyes met. She bent down without a word and kissed him on the lips.

What was she like when he saw her then? Grenier has described her in these words:

She was short and stout, but her face attracted all my attention, the eyes especially. They were wonderful eyes—a little too close together, it may be, large, with full eyelids, and black, very black, but by no means lustrous; they reminded me of unpolished marble, or rather of velvet, and this gave a strange, dull, even cold expression to her countenance. Her fine eyebrows and these great placid eyes gave her an air of strength and dignity which was not borne out by the lower part of her face. Her nose was rather thick and not over shapely. Her mouth was also rather coarse, and her chin small. She spoke with great simplicity, and her manners were very quiet.

Such as she was, she attached herself to Chopin for eight years. At first they traveled together very quietly to Majorca; and there, just as Musset had fallen ill at Venice, Chopin became feverish and an invalid. "Chopin coughs most gracefully," George Sand wrote of him, and again:

Chopin is the most inconstant of men. There is nothing permanent about him but his cough.

It is not surprising if her nerves sometimes gave way. Acting as sick nurse, writing herself with rheumatic fingers, robbed by every one

about her, and viewed with suspicion by the peasants because she did not go to church, she may be perhaps excused for her sharp words when, in fact, her deeds were kind.

Afterward, with Chopin, she returned to Paris, and the two lived openly together for seven years longer. An immense literature has grown around the subject of their relations. To this literature George Sand herself contributed very largely. Chopin never wrote a word; but what he failed to do, his friends and pupils did unsparingly.

Probably the truth is somewhat as one might expect. During the first period of fascination, George Sand was to Chopin what she had been to Sandeau and to Musset; and with her strange and subtle ways, she had undermined his health. But afterward that sort of love died out, and was succeeded by something like friendship. At any rate, this woman showed, as she had shown to others, a vast maternal kindness. She writes to him finally as "your old woman," and she does wonders in the way of nursing and care.

But in 1847 came a break between the two. Whatever the mystery of it may be, it turns upon what Chopin said of Sand:

"I have never cursed any one, but now I am so weary of life that I am near cursing her. Yet she suffers, too, and more, because she grows older as she grows more wicked."

In 1848, Chopin gave his last concert in Paris, and in 1849 he died. According to some, he was the victim of a Messalina. According to others, it was only "Messalina" that had kept him alive so long.

However, with his death came a change in the nature of George Sand. Emotionally, she was an extinct volcano. Intellectually, she was at her very best. She no longer tore passions into tatters, but wrote naturally, simply, stories of country life and tales for children. In one of her books she has given an enduring picture of the Franco-Prussian War. There are many rather pleasant descriptions of her then, living at Nohant, where she made a curious figure, bustling about in ill-fitting costumes, and smoking interminable cigarettes.

She had lived much, and she had drunk deep of life, when she died in 1876. One might believe her to have been only a woman of perpetual *liaisons*. Externally she was this, and yet what did Balzac, that great master of hu-

man psychology, write of her in the intimacy of a private correspondence?

She is a female bachelor. She is an artist. She is generous. She is devoted. She is chaste. Her dominant characteristics are those of a man, and therefore, she is not to be regarded as a woman. She is an excellent mother, adored by her children. Morally, she is like a lad of twenty; for in her heart of hearts, she is more than chaste—she is a prude. It is only in externals that she comports herself as a Bohemian. All her follies are titles to glory in the eyes of those whose souls are noble.

A curious verdict this! Her love-life seems almost that of neither man nor woman, but of an animal. Yet whether she was in reality responsible for what she did, when we consider her strange heredity, her wretched marriage, the disillusions of her early life—who shall sit in judgment on her, since who knows all?